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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE IMPACT OF CLAUSEWITZ ON MAO: WAR AND POLITICS

by

Bi Jianxiang

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Arts

Department of Political Science

Edmonton, Alberta

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Supervisor

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Date: April 18, 1989

To Xiaoming

Abstract

Clausewitz occupies a strong place in Mao Zedong's revolutionary theory. His concepts of absolute war and real war enrich Mao's theoretical approach to war and politics. His influence leads principally to Mao's assumption that war is politics and politics is war. Analysis of Mao's writings shows that there are important similarities as well as differences between his thought and that of Clausewitz. In the end, Mao's theory remains his own in spite of its being a synthesis of the ideas of Sun Zi, the Marxists, and Clausewitz.

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> A greater mind will soon appear to replace these individual nuggets with a single whole, cast of solid metal, free from all impurity.
>
> -----Clausewitz [1]

> The best theoretical statement of Communist military thought is found not in Soviet, but in Chinese writings. . . . Mao elaborated a theory of war which combines a high order of analytical ability with rare psychological insight and complete ruthlessness.
>
> -----Kissinger [2]

Introduction

Although labelled a "bourgeois military thinker," Clausewitz occupies a strong place in Mao Zedong's revolutionary theory. A reading of Mao's military writings leads to the conclusion that a close tie exists between Clausewitz's and Mao's views on war and politics. Clausewitz's formulation of war and politics enriched Mao's revolutionary doctrine. His strong influence affects principally the way in which Mao deals with the relationship of war and politics. Here, Mao's core theme is that war is inevitable

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[1]. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) 62.

[2]. Henry Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy (New York: Harper, 1957) 344-345.

while peace is temporary. By extension, "the struggle for survival" becomes the salient feature of Mao's political thought.

That Mao Zedong is influenced by Clausewitz's On War in making his own comprehensive theory of war is apparent in his writings which formulate Chinese communist strategy and tactics in the war against Japan; it is particularly evident in his "On Guerrilla Warfare" and "On Protracted War" written in the late 1930s. The very question of the extent to which On War permeates Mao's thought, especially his approach to war and politics, is certain to cause debate among Western and Chinese scholars, who seek to determine or deny Clausewitz's position in Mao's thought.

Some Western scholars assert that Mao is a student of Clausewitz or a Leninist Clausewitzian strategist, although even they do not appear to know for sure whether Mao read On War. Among them, R. Lynn Rylander holds that "there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that Mao was a student of Karl von Clausewitz."[3] From his point of view, the fact that certain of the ideas and phrases which appear in Mao's writings can also be found in Clausewitz shows the similarity between Mao and Clausewitz, although "the historical record of that period provides no conclusive evidence that Mao studied Clausewitz during his research."[4] However, Rylander's analysis does not grasp the essence and characteristic of such influence. Moreover, he does not answer the question why

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[3]. R. Lynn Rylander, "Mao as a Clausewitzian Strategist," Military Review, no. 8, 1981: 14.

[4]. Ibid., p. 15.

Mao, as a Chinese Marxist, accepts some ideas of Clausewitz, who is not a Marxist military thinker. In fact, his perspective ignores the philosophical, political, military, and social links between Mao and Clausewitz. Mao, in terms of his political ideology, is a Chinese Marxist, whereas Rylander neglects this class nature of his thought. Moreover, Mao received a Chinese education in which traditional philosophy occupied an important place and, consequently, also influenced strongly his political and military thought; but Rylander looks down on Mao's Chinese national characteristics. For this reason, his conclusion may be considered to be one-sided.

Raymond Aron sees Mao as a Leninist Clausewitzian strategist. As he writes:

> Mao [Zedong] reprend l'interpretation de Lenine sur le point qui m'a paru essential pour les marxistes-leninistes bien qu'etranger a l'homme Clausewitz et meme a son univers mental.[5]

From his class point of view, Mao read Lenin's interpretation of war and politics for ideological reasons. Consequently, Aron believes that "le concept clausewitzien (l'aneatissement de l'ennemi), passe par la traduction marxiste de Lenine, commande la vision historico-politique de Mao [Zedong]."[6] Furthermore, Aron points out that "des deux themes clausewitziens que Lenine avait retenus, guerre et politique, defense et attaque, Mao enrichit le

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5. Raymond Aron, Penser la querre, vol. II (Paris: Gallimard, 1976) 103.

6. Ibid., p. 116.

deuxieme plus que le premier."[7] Therefore, he concludes that "[Mao] cite la Formule, en renvoyant aux brochures de Lenine de 1915-1917."[8] From Aron's point of view, it appears that it is through reading Lenin's article that Mao knows Clausewitz. In other words, Mao synthesizes Lenin's interpretion of On War. It is true that Mao uses the quotation of Clausewitz from Socialism and War, in which Lenin just mentions the one phrase that "war is the continunation of politics by other means" and emphasizes the relationship between the working class and imperialist war, rather than Clausewitz's theory of absolute war and real war. Obviously, Lenin's influence on Mao is mainly in the domain of political ideology rather than from military strategy and tactics.

However, Mao's reading of On War seems to reverse orthodox Marxism. Ideologically, the Chinese War against Japan during which Mao formulates his military and political theories is a national war under the leadership of the Nationalist government rather than that of the Communists. Theoretically, in his "On Protracted War" Mao emphasizes the psychological and moral factors and denies Marxist dialectical materialism, one of the three basic principles of Marxism, that nature is primary and the spirit secondary. Practically, Mao believes that the main revolutionary forces in the war against Japan are the peasants rather than the working class. Moreover, the very nature of the Chinese War against Japan shows

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7. Ibid., p. 116.

8. Ibid., p. 103.

that it is less "class" and more "national" as a struggle. Strategically and tactically, Mao considers defense and attack as the most important part of the relationship between war and politics. Mao's reading of Lenin's interpretation, in which Lenin heavily concentrated on the class nature of war, does not have any direct effect on Mao's formulation of military theory in the Chinese War against Japan. In this sense, Aron's point of view appears to be simplistic.

In formulating their opinions, Westerners tend to overlook the fact that Chinese military history is itself rich in strategy and tactics and that it could be the main source of Mao's military theory. This heritage, particularly Sun Zi's The Art of War, enlighted not only native Mao, but also had interested Western military thinkers before him, such as Napoleon and Clausewitz.[9] On the other hand, the Chinese refuse even to acknowledge the influence of Clausewitz on Mao in order to defend the purity of Mao's military theory. Li Jijun denies that "Mao's military theory derives from Clausewitz," while arguing that "Mao critically adopts some military experiences summed up by the bourgeois military thinkers."[10] According to him, Mao has turned Clausewitz inside out as Marx has done with Hegel and elaborated his own military theory which favours Anti-Japanese war. Li's attitude towards Clausewitz

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[9]. Liddell Hart asserted that both Napoleon and Clausewitz were influenced by Sun Zi's The Art of War. See: "Foreword", in The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) vi.

[10].Li Jijun, "The Characteristics and Historical Position of Mao's Military Thought," Red Flag, no. 14, 1982: 14.

shows that Chinese scholars, strongly influenced by dogmatism, dare not go one step beyond the limit prescribed by the Party, which is not willing to accept the possibility that Mao takes major concepts directly as well as indirectly from Clausewitz. Li's approach, therefore, seems unrealistic.

The arguments of both Western and Chinese scholars appear to be oversimplified because they study the relationship between Mao and Clausewitz from one angle only and ignore the whole picture. As for evidence of Clausewitz's direct impact on Mao, this question was still unanswered even in the early 1980s. The reason for this uncertainty is that "Chinese Soviet government" documents of the 1930s are still not available to outsiders. Moreover, no academic work has been done on the impact of Clausewitz on Mao in the areas of war and politics. Consequently, both Western and Chinese scholars have contributed to the confusion surrounding this subject by their misinterpretation and perpetuation of myths.

This thesis will attempt to make clear that Mao was influenced both directly and indirectly by Clausewitz's On War, and that the relationship between Mao's and Clausewitz's thought may be seen as two linked circles, such as Sun Zi--Clausewitz--Mao and Clausewitz--Lenin--Mao. From the nationalist point of view, it is easy for the native, Mao, to understand Clausewitz, for the latter, according to Liddell Hart, adopted some ideas from Sun Zi. In terms of political ideology, it is natural for Mao, a Chinese Marxist, to accept Lenin's interpretation of On War centering on the class nature of war and politics. But, most significantly, Mao elaborates

his own military theory, in order to meet the needs and circumstances of the Chinese War, by bringing together parts of Sun Zi's, Clausewitz's, and Lenin's theories.

The thesis is divided into three sections. The first section will analyze Clausewitz's views on war and politics. The second will be devoted to a detailed examination of Mao's writings on war and politics, comparing these to the approaches of Sun Zi and the Marxists, in order to show the similarities between Mao and Clausewitz. The final section will emphasize the differences between Mao and Clausewitz, mainly from the military, ideological, and sociological points of view.

> War can be of two kinds, in the sense that either the objective is to overthrow the enemy--to render him politically helpless or militarily impotent, thus forcing him to sign whatever peace we please; or merely to occupy some of his frontier-districts so that we can annex them or use them for bargaining at the peace negotiations. Transitions from one type to the other will of course recur in my treatment; but the fact that the aims of the two types are quite different must be clear at all times, and their points of irreconcilability brought out.
>
> This distinction between the two kinds of war is a matter of an actual fact. But no less practical is the importance of another point that must be made absolutely clear, namely that war is nothing but the continuation of policy with other means. If this is firmly kept in mind throughout, it will greatly facilitate the study of the subject and the whole will be easier to analyze.[11]

Carl von Clausewitz, in his On War, explores the critical theme that politics, the policy of the government, enjoys priority over pure military affairs and dominates the whole process of military activity and, in turn, that war, the reciprocal and legitimized use of purposeful violence, is used as an instrument to reach political goals. In other words, the engagement is merely part of the campaign, which must be judged in relation to the entire war; and this war is a means that serves the policy of the state. The engagement and campaign are, then, subordinated to the

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[11]. Carl von Clausewitz, "Note of 10 July 1827", in On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 69.

ends of a war which is the continuation of politics by other means. This deliberately limited concept that war serves politics persists throughout Clausewitz's entire work.

Politics, in Clausewitz's view, should determine not only military objectives but also the means to be applied in war. Significantly, the application of force or the threat of force appears as the best choice. The bloody resolution of a crisis, the destruction of the enemy, is a way to achieve real war, political goals. In this context, moral and psychological factors, which Clausewitz puts at the very center of his study of war, have a decisive influence on the physical elements involved in war. In other words, the predominance of psychological elements over physical forces is another peculiar feature of Clausewitz's On War.[12] In exploring the relationship of war and politics, Clausewitz's dialectical approach, however, creates two theoretical issues: the relationship between absolute war and real war and the relationship between the three main components of war: the people,

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12. Liddell Hart maintains that "Clausewitz's greatest contribution to the theory of war was in emphasizing the psychological factors. Raising his voice against the geometrical school of strategy, then fashionable, he showed that the human spirit was infinitely more important than operational lines and angles. He discussed the effect of danger and fatigue, the value of boldness and determination, with deep understanding" (Strategy: the Indirect Approach, London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954, p. 353). On this point, Peter Paret holds that "Clausewitz placed psychological forces at the very center of the study of war" (Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, p. 204). Michael Howard also points out that "Clausewitz found that there were two such dimensions to be taken into account: the moral and the political ("Preface" in A Short Guide to Clausewitz, New York: Capricorn Books, 1968, pp. ix-x).

the commander and his army, and the government. War, according to Clausewitz, is organized mass violence, whose purpose is to compel the opponent to do one's will. Moreover, the thesis of absolute war as the ideal war is always followed by the antithesis of real war conceived as a political instrument. With regard to this dual nature of war, Clausewitz defines war as being composed of the people, the commander and his army, and the government, which interact in every war. In the broad sense, war is always linked with politics, economics, technology, and the society of the state concerned, which is deeply involved in the war. In the narrower sense, politics, the policy of the government, is the only source of war, whose immediate goal is to destroy the enemy.

The main characteristic of war, in Clausewitz's view, is its polarity. Its nature postulates, therefore, a thesis and an antithesis: theory and practice, psychological and physical, ends and means, limited war and absolute war, attack and defense, regular war and people's war, etc. This is the approach to the study of war chosen by Clausewitz. From this point of view, Clausewitz not only scrutinizes the salient features of war--for example, uncertainty, chance, and probability--but also illuminates the potential effect of psychological forces on the battlefield where everything seems to be guess-work. For this reason, Clausewitz argues that defense is a stronger form of war than attack.

Because of the varied, complex, and irrational nature of war, theory cannot guide war, but "shows how one thing is related to

another and keeps the important and unimportant separate".[13] However, in practice, "theoretical analysis alone, Clausewitz was convinced, could provide the means by which actual war in its incredible variety might be understood. In turn, the analysis of real war continually tests the validity of theory".[14] It is for this reason that On War attempts to highlight the permanent elements of war and to show the nature of war rather than how to conduct war. In this sense, On War transcends the limitations imposed on its concepts by the political, the economic, the military, or the technological environments of its times.

This chapter will focus, from a theoretical point of view, on the dual nature of war and the "trinity" of war according to Clausewitz. It will explore the relationship that he sees between absolute war and real war as well as the relationship between his three factors of war.

War

"War is a clash between major interests, which is resolved by bloodshed".[15] As a special phenomenon of human society, war differs from other conflicts and has its own peculiar characteristics: organized mass violence, uncertainty, and psychological forces.

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[13]. Book VIII, ch. 1, p. 578.

[14]. Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 198.

[15]. Book II, ch. 3, p. 149.

These characteristics of war are, in Clausewitz's view, present in all wars.

One of the main concerns of Clausewitz in his On War is the concept of absolute war as the ideal war. In his formulation of 1827, war is of two kinds: limited 'real' war and 'absolute' war. The former refers to the occupation of some frontier provinces, annexation of them or the use of them for peace negotiations, and the latter refers to the overthrowing of the enemy state. Moreover, violence is and must be a unique feature of war, since "the character of battle is slaughter, and its price is blood."[16] "Violence", Peter Paret comments, "continues to be the essence, the regulative idea, even of limited wars fought for limited ends, but in such cases the essence does not require its fullest expression".[17] In seeking to isolate such a universal element as violence in war, Clausewitz offers his concept of absolute war, emphasizing physical violence, the absence of logical limitation, and the destruction of the enemy.

> War is an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will. . . . there is no logical limit to the application of that force. Each side, therefore, compels its opponent to follow suit; a reciprocal action is started which must lead to extremes. . . . To overcome the enemy, or to disarm him must always be the aim of warfare. . . . Of all the possible aims in war, the destruction of the enemy's armed forces

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16. Book IV, ch. 11, p. 259.

17. Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 199.

always appears as the highest.[18]

Physical force is only the means of war, whose objective is to render the enemy powerless. In Clausewitz's metaphor, warfare is similar to a pair of wrestlers. Each attempts to overthrow his opponent through physical force in order to make him incapable of further resistance. Accordingly, the true aim of war, in terms of psychology, theory, and logic, is the same.

War is certainly composed of psychological motives--hostile feelings and hostile intentions--which make men fight against each other. Initially, such reaction focuses on hate, which implies an emotional aversion coupled with fear, anger, enmity, and malice. This innate behavior at its highest point provides a solid emotional and psychological background for hostile intentions, and ultimately for action: attack, directed towards a human object or a nonhuman object, or both of them. Of course, forcible action in war satisfies to some extent the political aims of war: overthrow of the enemy's state, occupation of the enemy country, destruction of the enemy forces, and the compelling of the enemy to do one's will. As Clausewitz puts it: "Modern wars are seldom fought without hatred between nations; this serves more or less as a substitute for hatred between individuals. . . . Violence committed on superior orders will stir up the desire for revenge and retaliation against the perpetrator rather than against the powers that ordered

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[18]. Book I, ch. 1 and 2, pp. 75-99.

the action".[19] In other words, hostile feelings produce hostile intentions and the latter may cause physical confrontation between two sides. "If war is an act of force, the emotions cannot fail to be involved. War may not spring from them, but they will still affect it to some degree".[20] Emotional and psychological motives are, in fact, the prelude to physical violence.

In theory, war is fighting, the only effective means of reaching a higher aim. Fighting means that the destruction of the enemy appears as the highest goal in war, a goal with which others cannot compete. The basic reason for this violence is that war is always the conflict of two living forces. Each tries, through physical force, to impose its will on the other. To achieve this aim, the skilful concentration of superior strength at the critical point in time and space, will, in both strategy and tactics, annihilate enemy forces.

> If the enemy is thrown off balance, he must not be given time to recover. Blow after blow must be aimed in the same direction; the victor, in other words, must strike with all his strength, and not just against a fraction of the enemy's. Not by taking things the easy way--using superior strength to filch some province, preferring the security of the minor conquest to a major success--but by constantly seeking out the center of his power, by daring all to win all, will one really defeat the enemy.[21]

From this theoretical point of view, heavy loss of life means

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[19]. Book II, ch. 2, p. 138.

[20]. Book I, ch. 1, p. 76.

[21]. Book VIII, ch. 4, p. 596.

that the antagonist state has lost both its effective defense and offense, because men are the most important factor in war and everything else in war is the fruit of their labour. Having suffered dire losses in manpower, the enemy will submit completely to one's will.

In reality, however, four factors are constantly present in war: "human fear and indecisiveness, which are intensified in war; imperfect insight into reality, which leads to errors in judgement; the greater strength of the defensive; weak political motives, which may be so feeble that they turn war into a fragmentary thing."[22] According to Clausewitz, such elements modify the absolute nature of war: "Thus, in the midst of the conflict itself, concern, prudence, and fear of excessive risks find reason to assert themselves and to tame the elemental fury of war."[23] In this sense, fear, misjudgement, strong defense, and weak politics may temporarily suspend military activity.

Additionally, the aim of destruction of the enemy is, in fact, not always present in reality; and it cannot be regarded as the only means to the end. In this regard, Clausewitz writes:

> the fact that engagements do not always aim at the destruction of the opposing forces, that their objectives can often be attained without any fighting at all but merely by an evaluation of the situation, explains why entire campaigns can be conducted with great energy even though actual fighting plays an unimportant part in

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[22]. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 366-367.

[23]. Book III, ch, 16, p. 218.

them.[24]

When one side is much stronger than the other, the weaker side may surrender without fighting. Nevertheless, war is bloodshed and blood is the price of victory. In Clausewitz's own words, "the violent resolution of the crisis, the wish to annihilate the enemy's forces, is the first-born son of war".[25]

Logically, like a coin, war has two sides. War being an act of violence, according to Clausewitz, there is no limit to the application of force. Mutually hostile intentions, involving the use of force to disarm the opponent, lead to hostile relations between the two opponents, which, in turn, result in a series of interactions leading to the extreme. Theoretically speaking, each tries to impose the use of overwhelming force on the other in order to gain a decisive advantage. In fact, even the judicious employment of violence does not change the ultimate goal of war--destruction of the enemy. One side's seeking the maximum use of force to defeat the opponent certainly encourages the other side to act similarly. This is the first interaction and extreme reached in the use of violence.

Secondly, from a theoretical point of view, the logical military objective of war is to disarm the enemy. If one side is compelled to submit to the will of the other side, it must, theoretically, be defenseless. Moreover, since war is an

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[24]. Book I, ch. 2, p. 96.

[25]. Book I, ch. 2, p. 99.

interaction between living forces, each side must, theoretically, either make its enemy defenseless, or at least put the enemy in the situation of greater disadvantage. Otherwise, it will be destroyed by the other side. This is the second interaction and extreme resulting from the use of physical force.

Finally, the "positive" efforts of one side to destroy or disarm the other must be matched against the "negative" power of the other to resist. This negative power can be regarded as the product of two inseparable factors--the total means at the defender's disposal and his strength of will. Of course, it is relatively easy to determine the defender's means. However, the measure of his strength of will is at best an approximation. In war, it follows, then, that each of the opponents can be expected to try to increase his own strength of will. This competition between the two results in a multiplication of the power of resistance to the other's will. This is the third interaction and extreme that comes with the employment of violence.

Clausewitz's absolute war as the ideal war is "a clash of forces freely operating and obedient to no law but their own, eventually reach[ing] the extreme--absolute war, that is, absolute violence ending in the total destruction of one side by the other".[26] Yet, in particular situations, Clausewitz recognizes the possibility of winning the engagement without fighting. However, the core theme of his theory of absolute war is the violence which

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[26]. Book, I, ch. 1, pp. 77-78.

characterizes the whole process of war. Clausewitz argues:

> We are not interested in generals who win victories without bloodshed. The fact that slaughter is a horrifying spectacle must make us take war more seriously, but not provide an excuse for gradually blunting our swords in the name of humanity. Sooner or later someone will come along with a sharp sword and hack off our arms.[27]

In his concept of absolute war, Clausewitz sees one of the striking characteristics of war as being chance; but, in the very context of chance, unique human qualities of discipline and creativity--spirit, ability, talent, and genius--can act effectively. In this polarity of war, the poles of pure chance and human qualities are closely related. Consequently, there is no fixed form of war in reality; and theory cannot guide war but can only provide a series of references for the commanders. War, "like birds in the air and fish in water," is unpredictable. In other words, the subjective nature of war makes it like a gamble in which guess-work and luck come to play an important role. Subjectively, the aim of war is to destroy the opponent. However, the existence of objective circumstances, such as natural factors (space, time, and weather) and social factors (economics, technology, and politics), turns the subjective aspiration into a probability rather than a reality. Thus, uncertainty in war results in a gap between subjectivity and objectivity.

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[27]. Book IV, ch. 11, p. 260.

From the very earliest stage, the threads of chance and uncertainty weave their way throughout the entire process of war. Consequently, chance and uncertainty interfere with the whole course of events. In this sense, war is similar to gambling, as Peter Paret explains: "The reason a gambler hesitates to risk everthing on one card, preferring instead to extend his game, is fear--besides pleasure in the game. In war fear may similarly prolong the duration of the conflict."[28] It challenges men to become more deeply involved in uncertain competition and to make uninterrupted war.

In this regard, Clausewitz attempts to describe the unpredictable nature of war by comparing war and painting. Both are concerned with creative ability and require particular technical expertise. However, their progress and effect are unpredictable and cannot be mechanically imitated. From Clausewitz's point of view, war deals with living, psychological, and moral forces, of which all activity is continuously bound up with chance. Additionally, for Clausewitz, the study of war, like that of biology, seeks the individual and unpredictable characteristic of conflicts:

> War is not like a field of wheat, which, without regard to the individual stalk, may be mown more or less efficiently depending on the quality of the scythe; it is like a stand of mature trees in which the axe has to be used judiciously according to the characteristics and development of the individual trunk.[29]

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[28]. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 361.

[29]. Book II, ch. 4, p. 153.

It follows, then, that, each war having its own singularity just as each period has its own theory of war, each war must be treated individually so that one can fight at the right place and right time.

For this reason, "theory cannot equip the mind with formulae for solving problems, nor can it mark the narrow path on which the sole solution is supposed to lie by planting a hedge of principles on either side."[30] Theory, in Clausewitz, is used to understand the general phenomenon of war. For him, theory should be reexamined and placed in a critical structure which prevents it from losing validity with changing conditions and which makes it sufficiently adaptable to future advances of theory. From his point of view, "in the conduct of war, the complex phenomena of warfare are not so uniform, nor the uniform phenomena so complex," with the result that "there are hundreds of cogent local and special conditions to which the absolute rule must yield".[31] Furthermore, the function of theory is firstly to educate the minds of future commanders rather than to guide them in the battlefield. This theoretical education challeges young officers' intellectual development, enriches their knowledge of war, and also helps them to avoid the pitfalls created by the constant change and diversity of the phenomena of war.

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30. Book VIII, ch. 1, p. 578.

31. Book II, ch. 4, p. 152 and Book V, ch. 5, p.295.

Secondly, the function of theory is to clarify concepts and ideas that have become confused and entangled and to provide a series of references for analyzing the constituent elements of war and their relationship and for discovering the logical and dynamic links that bind them into a comprehensible structure.

Finally, Clausewitz stresses that theory should be comprehensive, that is, it must highlight all aspects of its subject, whether of the present or the past. The understanding of theory helps one to approach as closely as possible the total phenomonon of war and its component parts and to grasp the particularities of specific, current wars. His pragmatic approach to theory leads him to overemphasize the function of practice and, on the other hand, to ignore the relevance of expertise on the battlefield.

> Military activity in general is served by an enormous amount of expertise and skills, all of which are needed to place a well-equipped force in the field. They coalesce into a few great results before they attain their final purpose in war, like streams combining to form rivers before they flow into the sea. The man who wishes to control them must familiarize himself only with those activities that empty themselves into the great oceans of war. . . . Only this explains why in war men have so often successfully emerged in the higher ranks, and even as supreme commanders, whose former field of endeavor was entirely different; the fact, indeed, that distinguished commanders have never emerged from the ranks of the most erudite or scholarly officers, but have been for the most part men whose station in life could not have brought them a high degree of education.[32]

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[32]. Book II, ch. 2, pp. 144-145.

From a negative point of view, Clausewitz explains the importance of practice and concludes that "great things alone can make a great mind, and petty things will make a petty mind."[33] In other words, it is war, rather than education or theory of war, that brings forth great commanders. Doubtlessly, chance, the diversified forms of war, and the indirect function of theory combine to give war a negative aspect: war is unpredictable.

It is evident that Clausewitz's approach to theory is closely linked with his intellectual background. Throughout the eighteenth century, the debate on whether scientific principles were to be used in the conduct of war was carried on between civilian and military thinkers in Germany. Among civilian writers, Kant, from his idealist point of view, argued that if rational and human men really controlled the decision-making of the state and the affairs of the state, "the world might enjoy perpetual peace."[34] However, military writers explored another concept, one in which "war in the hands of experts could be carried on with such skill and moderation as to be virtually bloodless."[35] As a matter of fact, both attempted to find a rational way to reduce the irrational play of chance and uncertainty in war, although they emphasized different aspects of waging war. The Newtonian universe, in which "objective reality was

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[33]. Book II, ch. 2, p. 145.

[34]. Michael Howard, Clausewitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 12.

[35]. ibid., p. 13.

governed by forces and principles quite external to man,"[36] was accepted by Kant. Under the influence of Kantian ideas, Clausewitz believed that war was a clash of wills dominated by psychological and moral forces rather than by scientific rules. Consequently, for him, the theory of war indicated only what others had actually done in earlier wars and challenged people to make their own evaluations and formulations of theory in terms of their own time and space. Clausewitz maintains that "it is a very difficult task to construct a scientific theory for the art of war, and so many attempts have failed that most people say it is impossible, since it deals with matters that no permanent law can provide for."[37] Therefore, in Clausewitz's mind, the very nature of war involves moral, emotional, and psychological forces opposing physical forces.

In contrast to the objective reality of war, the psychological and moral qualities of spirit, ability, talent, and genius play an important, subjective role in war. Every aspect of war is influenced by psychological qualities in both a positive and a negative sense. Under some circumstances, the weaker army with the stronger passion may win the victory over the physically stronger one. As long as the creative employment of intellectual and psychological strengths are fully exploited in war, an army can overcome the negative and disadvantageous factors which cannot be predicted. Obviously, psychological elements can turn these

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[36]. ibid., p. 13.

[37]. On War, p. 71.

unfavourable conditions into assets. In war, no matter how slowly the shift of the military forces in balance occurs, psychological and moral values are certain to appear, to have great impact, and to change the whole situation on the battlefield.

The effect on battle of the army's morale is even greater in reality than in theory. The outcome of war is decided more by all strengths, physical as well as moral, than by individual dispositions or mere chance. In this regard, Clausewitz writes:

> They [all these attempts] direct the inquiry exclusively towards physical quantities, whereas all military action is intertwined with psychological forces and effects. They consider only unilateral action, whereas war consists of a continuous interaction of opposites.[38]

Physical and moral strengths become interactive, each enhancing and intensifying the other. However, one must place special emphasis on the moral effects, because of their positive and negative natures, which merge with the conditions of warfare.

Moral factors, according to Clausewitz, reside in "the skill of the commander, the experience and courage of the troops, and their patriotic spirit".[39] The skill of the commander refers to the commander's genius and talent--a very highly developed mental aptitude for his military occupation and technical expertise in it. The experience and courage of the troops imply their practical knowledge and psychological strength, their willingness and ability

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[38]. Book II, ch. 2, p. 136.

[39]. Book III, ch. 4, p. 168.

to venture, to persevere, and to withstand danger, fear,and difficulty, as well as their patriotism and ardour. These qualities interact with each other and provide a certain strength of body and soul. If one possesses these values, even if one has nothing but common sense as a guide, one is well prepared for war. Hence, Clausewitz emphasizes:

> The most powerful springs of action in man lie in his emotions. He derives his most vigorous support, if we may use the term, from that blend of brains and temperament which we have learned to recognize in the qualities of determination, firmness, staunchness, and strength of character.[40]

For Clausewitz, a commander should have a very highly developed mental aptitude or military genius for conducting war. He argues:

> We cannot restrict our discussion to genius proper, as a superlative degree of talent, for this concept lacks measurable limits. What we must do is to survey all those gifts of mind and temperament that in combination bear on military activity. These, taken together, constitute the essence of military genius. We have said in combination, since it is precisely the essence of military genius that it does not consist in a single appropriate gift--courage, for example--while other qualities of mind or temperament are wanting or are not suited to war. Genius consists in a harmonious combination of elements, in which one or the other ability may predominate, but none may be in conflict with the rest.[41]

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[40]. Book I, ch. 3, p. 112.

[41]. Book I, ch. 3, p. 100.

Genius, in Clausewitz's eyes, is the talent which, as an innate creative ability in commanders, is itself part of nature. Such innate psychological powers help commanders to establish the conduct of war. According to him, there is no conflict between the actions of genius and the maxims of sound theory, since genius is the source of theory, or gives expression to it.[42] In other words, theory is dominated by great creative talent. This idea of genius proper seems to be closely connected with the aesthetic theories of the German Enlightenment and their concept of genius, which is "doubly valuable because it not only stands for the gifts and effectiveness of the exceptional man but can also illuminate the various abilities and feelings that affect the military behavior of more ordinary individuals."[43] Genius, for Clausewitz, explains the freedom of will and action in war.

"Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult,"[44] writes Clausewitz. In reality, there is friction between the theory and the practice of war. Since war is a mixture of military theory and practice, it cannot be conducted according to military laws. Thus, the idea of friction corresponds to the factors that distinguish real war from theoretical war. Whereas the military machine seems to be very simple, in fact, it is composed of different complex components: the physical and the moral, the

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42. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 161.

43. Ibid., p. 160.

44. Book I, ch. 7, p. 119.

individual and the whole, the front and the rear, the military and the economic, the technological and the political, etc. All these characteristics require that a commander have not just rich experience and strong will, but also exceptional organizational ability.

In accordance with the nature of absolute war, Clausewitz believes, as has been noted, that defense is a stronger form of war than attack. As the positive purpose of war, attack is intended to destroy the enemy, while the passive side of war, defense is to preserve strength and to wait for the chance, assuming that both side have equal means or that the attacker is stronger than the defender. Under such circumstances, only if the defender preserves himself, can he reach his final goal--the destruction of the enemy. Otherwise, he will be vaniquished by his opponent. Preserving ones own force has a passive purpose--to frustrate the enemy, and the final goal can only be reached through a protracted war and the enemy's exhaustion. Clausewitz maintains: "defense has a passive purpose: preservation: and attack a positive one: conquest. The latter increases one's own capacity to wage war; the former does not. So, in order to state the relationship precisely, we must say that the defensive form of warfare is intrinsically stronger than the offensive".[45] It is evident that many roads in war can lead to sucess. However, the only way to destroy the enemy is by fighting, and here, according to Clausewitz, defense may provide a two-to-

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[45]. Book VI, ch. 1, p. 358.

one advantage: "the addition that gives strength to the defensive form of war is not only deducted from the side that moves from the defensive to the offensive, it also accrues to the opponent, so that this addition in strength must be figured twice, just as the difference between A + B and A - B is the same as 2 B."[46] Attack requires more force than defense and defense may supply more advantages than attack. Attack weakens as it progresses, and it is the weaker form of war with the more positive aim, while defense is the stronger form of war with the more negative aim.

Consequently, the people's war or the revolutionary war becomes the means which provides advantages for the defender. "Any nation that uses it [people's war] intelligently will, as a rule, gain some superiority over those who disdain its use."[47] On the other hand, Clausewitz doubts the value of this model in future wars. He writes:

> War, untrammelled by any conventional restraints, had broken loose in all its elemental fury. This was due to the people's new share in these great affairs of state; and their participation, in turn, resulted partly from the impact that the Revolution had on the internal conditions of every state and partly from the danger that France posed to everyone. Will this always be the case in the future? From now on will every war in Europe be waged with the full resources of the State, and therefore have to be fought only over major issues that affect the people? Or shall we again see a gradual separation taking place between government and people? Such questions are difficult to answer, and we are the last to dare to do so. But the reader will agree

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46. Book III, ch. 16, p. 218.

47. Book VI, ch. 26, p. 479.

> with us when we say that once barriers--which in a sense consist only in man's ignorance of what is possible--are torn down, they are not easily set up again. At least when major interests are at stake, mutual hostility will express itself in the same manner as it has in our own day.[48]

According to Clausewitz, a people's war may not be the form of war, which states will subscribe in the future. His confusion on this point seems to be rooted in his dialectical and pragmatical approach to war.

To summarize, in the theory of absolute war, Clausewitz claims that the objective of war is to destroy the enemy. Due to the existence of chance, uncertainty, and probability, theory can not guide war but can serve to educate future commanders and to present the basic elements of war. For these reasons, only psychological and moral qualities of discipline and creativity--spirit, ability, talent, and genius--can act effectively in war. Finally, defense is a stronger form of war than attack.

Politics

"Politics is the womb in which war develops--where its outlines already exist in their hidden rudimentary form, like the characteristics of living creatures in their embryos."[49] According to Clausewitz, politics is the essence of war and war is an instrument of politics to achieve immediate political objectives

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[48]. Book VIII, ch. 3, p. 593.

[49]. Book II, ch. 3, p. 149.

and is dependent on the policy of the government involved in war. Moreover, he states, "the conduct of war, in its great outlines, is therefore policy itself, which takes up the sword in place of the pen."[50]

In Clausewitz's formulation, politics, defined as the policy of the government, is and must be the real purpose of war. Furthermore, the political motives remain paramount throughout the whole process of war, although sometimes military and political objectives do not coincide at the time of a specific engagement. Still, politics is the original motive of war. Clausewitz defines real war in this way:

> War is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means. . . . [As] war springs from some political purpose, it is natural that the prime cause of its existence will remain the supreme consideration in conducting it. . . . War [is] a remarkable trinity--composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, of the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam, and of its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone.[51]

This is Clausewitz's concept of real war or of war conceived as a political instrument. He argues that "No one starts a war--or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so--without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how

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[50]. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 610.

[51]. Book I, ch. 1, pp. 86-89.

he intends to conduct it."[52] Clausewitz prescribes a political objective and military approach. He sees war in the abstract as being different from that of the real world. The reason for this distinction is that war, in the broader sense, is dependent on politics rather than being an isolated act; in reality, it is also shaped by friction and other modifying forms. It is not a single short blow since the major resources available for the conduct of war--the army, the country with its physical features, its people, and its alliances--cannot be mobilized and engaged all at once. Finally, since the results of war cannot always be considered as final, the possibility for a political or military remedy at some later date is left open. Hence, real war replaces theoretical war. In other words, the political objective, which is the original motive, becomes an essential factor in ır and determines the military objective.

Politics penetrates all aspects of a military operation, and in so far as the violent nature of war will admit, politics will have a continuous influence. In this respect, each specific conflict should be shaped and guided by the kind and intensity of its political motives. Clausewitz sees that, since war originates in a conflict of the interests of the major powers, these interests are political in nature and more significantly, that these political interests remain present in the war. War, therefore, depends largely on the political nature of the states involved. The

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[52]. Book VIII, ch. 2, p. 579.

political character of war is greatly increased when the strategic plans of the state involved are applied to the entire campaign. War plans result directly from the political conditions of the two warring states, as well as from their relations to third powers. Tactical plans result from the strategic plans. With regard to this deduction, the engagement and campaign are also influenced by the politics of the belligerent states.

Because of politics' domination over the purpose of fighting, over the means adopted, and over the goals to be attained, war cannot be considered an isolated area of human activity. It is, rather, an extension of politics in different form. For Clausewitz, whatever the nature of a theory governing the practice of war, it must be based on the acknowledgement that war is an act of politics. The final aim of war is surely a political one: the restoration of peace under favourable political conditions. For Clausewitz, it seems that the more violent the war is, the more political coloured it is.

"The degree of force that must be used against the enemy depends on the scale of political demands on either side," writes Clausewitz.[53] The resources mobilized for war will be decided by the belligerents' political aims. The strength and ability of the opposing state, the character and ability of its government and people, the political sympathies of other states, and the potential effect of war are heavily involved in the consideration.

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[53]. Book VIII, ch. 3, p. 585.

These aspects of real war imply that violence will be the only way to pursue its political objectives in war. Clausewitz maintains that "if the state is thought of as a person, and policy as the product of its brain, then among the contingencies for which the state must be prepared is a war in which every element calls for policy to be eclipsed by violence."[54] Politics is surely the core theme of war, although sometimes its political character is not as strong as its military character.

Furthermore, in Clausewitz's remarkable "trinity" of war, war is made up of three important factors: the people, the commander and his army, and the government. Firstly, the people's role in war is simply as an instrument of the government, which inspires a people in arms. Clausewitz writes:

> No matter how clearly we see the citizen and the soldier in the same man, how strongly we conceive of war as the business of the entire nation. . . . the business of war will always remain individual and distinct. Consequently, for as long as they practice this activity, soldiers will think of themselves as members of a kind of guild, in whose regulations, laws and customs the spirit of war is given pride of place.[55]

For Clausewitz, the people are soldiers and soldiers are the people. In his historical discussion of the coming of the French Revolution, Clausewitz asserts the importance of the mobilization of the people:

War. . . . again became the concern of the

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[54]. Book I, ch. 1, p. 88.

[55]. Book III, ch. 5, p. 187.

> people as a whole, took on an entirely different character. There seemed no end to the resources mobilized; all limits disappeared in the vigor and enthusiasm shown by governments and their subjects. . . . War, untrammeled by any conventional restraints, had broken loose in all its elemental fury."[56]

Savage people, in Clausewitz's mind, are ruled by passion, whereas civilized people are ruled with their mind.[57] Directly or indirectly, the people participate in war in the name of the state and army. Whatever the strategy and tactics, the success of war depends more on the moral character of the people. This is especially true in revolutionary war, in which the brave and loyal people struggle for their political beliefs.

The second part of Clausewitz's "trinity" is the commander and his army. The supreme, the most far-reaching judgement which a statesman and a commander have to make in going to war is whether the political objective can be attained through a dictated peace, or only through a negotiated peace. Because of the uncertainty of war not only in space and time but also in the political intentions of the enemy state, commanders must be highly intelligent and skilful in order to deal with the complex situation on the battlefield. Therefore, a brave but brainless commander can do nothing of much significance in war. Genius, talent, and ability are reserved for those who have excelled in the highest positions--as commanders-in-chief--since here the demands for intellectual

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[56]. Book VIII, ch. 3, pp. 592-593.

[57]. Book I, ch. 1, p. 76.

and moral powers are vastly greater. Clausewitz describes what is required of a commander: "a commander-in-chief must also be a stateman, but he must not cease to be a general. On the one hand, he is aware of the entire political situation, on the other, he knows exactly how much he can achieve with the means at his disposal."[58]

Since war is a special activity, different and separate from any other action pursued by men, the army should have strong military qualities. These are based on the qualities of the individual soldier. The soldier, according to Clausewitz, is not only armed with professional expertise but also with particular military virtues: bravery, boldness, preseverance, etc. Collectively, in order to win the war, soldiers should be imbued with the single, powerful idea of the honor of their arms. Herein lies the true military spirit.

Finally, in Clausewitz's "trinity", war is the business of government. Each state's power to make war is realized in an organizational pattern that takes into account the following: war itself is a manifestation of conflict between opposing states, with tactical victory at decisive points in time and space as the focal point of organization common to both. Thus, the destruction of enemy forces in an engagement becomes a means to an end, the end being victory in war, the results of which must be accepted and acted upon operationally by both sides, whatever the form of the

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[58]. Book I, ch. 3, p. 112.

strategy to which each side is committed. It is in this strategy-making process that government is heavily involved in order to reach its political objectives. For Clausewitz, it is the task of political leaders to make the state's policy a rational policy, which the army helps to carry out.

In war, government pursues its own interests and makes war a business. Relations with other countries concern only the government. Clausewitz states that, in war, "one country may support another's cause, but will never take it so seriously as it takes its own."[59] Such an alliance is based only on the country's own interests, its security, and fears. In the light of the risks they expect and of the dividends they hope to reap, governments make war into something like a business deal between states. Moreover, military organization is based on money and recruitment, since it is the government that pays the army. For this reason, the army becomes a property of the government. "A government behave[s] as though it owne[s] and manage[s] a great estate that it constantly endeavore[s] to enlarge--an effort in which the inhabitants [are] not expected to show any particular interest."[60]

Thus, war is dominated by these three elements--the people, the commander and his army, the government--which Clausewitz terms "tendencies": "these three tendencies are like three different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in

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[59]. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 603.

[60]. Book VIII, ch. 3, p. 589.

their relationship to one another."[61] These three divergent tendencies constitute a single system of action when harmonized as state policy. As such they offer the basis for an evolving theory of war--a theory grounded in historical experience, adaptable to current realities, and capable of being put into practice against an enemy who is faced with essentially the same strategic problem. The basic function of a theory of war is to provide a critical analysis for the balance between these three tendencies and to show the need for a close integration of the people, the commander and his army, and the government.

War and Politics

The antithesis of absolute war and real war runs through the Clausewitz's entire study. Absolute war, for Clausewitz, is merely combat; in real war, politics is the "sword in place of the pen." The dialectical relationship between the two ideas is a salient feature of his concept of war. War is a political instrument of the state which is deeply involved in the armed conflict; and politics determines the character of war.

According to Clausewitz, war is not an act of senseless passion, but is controlled by its political objective. The value of this objective must determine the magnitude and the duration of the sacrifices to be made for it. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political objective, the objective must

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[61]. Book I, ch. 1, p. 89.

be renounced; and peace must follow. In war, all factors are influenced by and must center on politics, which is the only source of war. The end of war is victory, which means peace. The political characteristics of war never change, although many roads can lead to victory. Overall, "to bring a war, or one of its campaigns, to a successful close requires a thorough grasp of national policy."[62]

It is true, in the broader sense, that war is politics, because sometimes the political and military objective are the same, such as the conquest of the enemy's country. However, in the narrower sense, and in some specific cases, the political objective does not fit in with the immediate military goal; and the same political objective can elicit differing reactions from different peoples, and even from the same people at different times. When the latter is the case, another military objective must be adopted that will serve the political purpose and symbolize it in the peace negotiation. It is evident that both unity and disparity exist between war and politics, which are closely connected with each other in the entire war, while opposed with each other in regard to details. But, states Clausewitz, "situations can exist in which the political object will almost be the sole determinant."[63]

At the highest level, the art of war turns into policy--but policy conducted by fighting battles rather than by sending diplomatic notes. Politics converts the overwhelming destructive

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62. Book I, ch. 3, p. 111.

63. Book I, ch. 1, p. 81.

element of war into a mere instrument. Politics, of course, is influential in the planning of war, of the campaign, and even of the battle. Accordingly, the aim of policy is to unify and reconcile all aspects of internal administration as well as moral and psychological values. Politics is the trustee for all these interests against the outside world. "We can only treat policy as representative of all interests of the community," indicates Clausewitz.[64] In this sense, war presents the interests of the government; and victory, the end of war, is the realization of the interests of the government.

Within the concept of absolute war, every component of war is related to the object of the war. However, the results in some engagements which are expected by commanders may not have been achieved; and some unexpected results may occur. The gap between subjectivity and objectivity indicates the reason "why war turns into something quite different from what it should be according to theory--turns into something incoherent and imcomplete."[65] Moreover, war and its form result from the ideas, emotions, and conditions prevailing at the time; and war is dependent on the interplay of all expected and unexpected factors which cannot be predicted on the battlefield. Unfortunately, theory cannot settle this kind problem. It just provides references so that those "who want to learn from theory become accustomed to keeping that point in view

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64. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 607.

65. Book VIII, ch. 2, p. 580.

constantly, to measuring all [their] hopes and fears by it, and to approximating it when [they] can or when [they] must."[66]

In terms of the relationship between war and politics, there is also a gap between the politician and the general. If the policy is successful, any impact that it makes on the conduct of war can only be positive. If it has a negative effect, the policy itself must be wrong. Clausewitz compares the study of a foreign language to the making of policy in order to indicate why sometimes politicians fail to make reasonable decisions. Just as a man who has not fully mastered a foreign language sometimes does not express himself correctly, so politicians fail to master the language of war. They issue orders which damage their real objective. In order to prevent this misjudgment, politicians should have a grasp of military affairs, which is vital for them in policy-making. Similarly, a general should also be familiar with politics, which is the soul of war. For this reason, Clausewitz suggests:

> If war is to be fully consonant with political objectives, and policy suited to the means available for war, then unless statesman and soldier are combined in one person, the only sound expedient is to make the commander-in-chief a member of the cabinet, so that the cabinet can share in the major aspects of his activities.[67]

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[66]. Book VIII, ch. 2, p. 581.

[67]. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 608.

Thus, both politician and general should avoid having a handicap in political and military affairs. In Clausewitz's view, the two are inseparable: "the transformation of the art of war resulted from the transformation of politics. So far from suggesting that the two could be disassociated from each other, these changes are a strong proof of their indissoluble connection."[68]

War is an expression of political life, shaped by the social, physical, and psychological qualities of the state; and politics defines the character of the armed conflict between states. However, gaps exist in the relationship between war and politics, between subjectivity and objectivity, between theory and practice, and between politician and general. Despite such divisions, "war is an instrument of policy. It must necessarily bear the character of policy and measure by its standards. The conduct of war, in its great outlines, is therefore policy itself, which takes up the sword in place of the pen."[69]

Conclusion

Clausewitz explores the two dialectical relationships between absolute war and real war and between the three elements (tendencies) that together make up war--the people, the commander and his army, and the government. His theory of absolute war presents war as the reciprocal and legitimized use of purposeful violence to compel the opponent to do one's will. However, the

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[68]. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 610.

[69]. Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 610.

nature of force makes war uncertain, like a gamble. This particularly irrational aspect of war determines that theory can guide war but, in practice, cannot lead it infallibly. Moral and psychological factors, which link theory and practice, play an important role on the battlefield. For these reasons, defense is a stronger form of war than attack. On the other hand, real war is an instrument to reach the immediate political goals of states. At the highest level, such politics, the policy of the government, turns war into politics and, further, permeates the whole process of war: war, campaign, and even battle. In reality, war consists of the people, the commander and his army, and the government through which the policy of the state is fully expressed.

This identity of war and politics in Clausewitz's mind has several origins. Firstly, it derives from the dialectical approach that Clausewitz uses to analyze the relationship between war and politics. His concept of polarity indicates the separation and connection of active and passive, positive and negative, and subjective and objective. This approach is also used to dissect the links between defense and attack. "His dialectical development of ideas through thesis and antithesis," Peter Paret states, "were the common property of educated Germans at the time."[70] According to Paret, Clausewitz's dialectical approach was influenced by Goethe,

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[70].Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 194.

Schelling, and Hegel.[71] This theoretical method explains the coincidence of military and political, which includes not only abstract, absolute war, but also the actual physical, intellectual, and psychological aspects of real war.

Secondly, Clausewitz employs an epistemological perspective for showing the evolution of knowledge of war. Such knowledge can "only be gained by a special talent, through the medium of reflection, study, and thought. This process emphasizes that an intellectual instinct will extract the essence from the phenomena of real life, as a bee sucks honey from a flower."[72] In addition to study and reflection, life or practice is the only source of knowledge. Clausewitz's assumption of knowledge clearly bears similarity to the Kantian model, which contains two elements: the analytic and the synthetic,[73] although there is no solid evidence that Clausewitz read Kant's works.[74] With regard to Kantian

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71. Peter Paret holds that, in On War, the separation of a force into opposites, and their reunification, was basic to Goethe's view of nature; for Shelling the absolutes of nature and spirit were composed of polarities; and Hegel wrote of the necessary relationship between two opposites, which were actually one since the existence of one also necessitated the existence of the other. See "Studies in Policy and Theory," in Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 147-208.

72. Book II, ch. 2, p. 146.

73. Francis H. Eterovich, Approaches to Natural Law (New York: Exposition Press, 1972) 142.

74. Peter Paret maintains that Clausewitz, in any case, was not a trained philosopher. We have no evidence that he read such works as the Kantian critiques (Clausewitz and the State, New York: Oxford University Press, 1976, p. 150). On this issue, W.B. Gallie shares Paret's view, indicating that there is good evidence that Clausewitz was in some way much influenced by Kant, although just how remains uncertain (Philosophers of Peace and War, Cambridge:

philosophy, Clausewitz recognizes that some things cannot be fully understood in the transformation from the abstract to the real world, in which everything takes different shape; but that does not mean that they should be ignored. From Clausewitz's point of view, psychological and moral elements are not fully appreciated by people; consequently, he puts this issue at the centre of his study of war.

Thirdly, Clausewitz takes an abstract and simplified approach to exploring his concepts of war in order to give lasting value to his theory. From his point of view, war is not just a craft, but a great socio-political activity distinguished from all other activities by the reciprocal and legitimized use of purposeful violence to attain political objectives.[75] For this reason, he quite deliberately focuses on two aspects, war and politics, and ignores all aspects which are not of immediate relevance to the conduct of war. His idea is well expressed in On War.

> The conduct of war has nothing to do with making guns and powder out of coal, sulphur, saltpeter, copper and tin; its given quantities are weapons that are ready for use and their

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Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 52). However, Raymond Aron takes a very different view on this question. He asks: "Clausewitz a-t-il lu Kant ou Hegel?. . . L'historien arrive rapidement au bout de la premiere sorte de consideration. Clausewitz a suivi, a Berlin, pendant qu'il etudiait a l'Ecole general de Guerre, peut-etre meme plus tard, des cours d'un vulgarisateur de Kant, J.G. Kiesewetter. W.M. Schering a retrouve, dans les archives de la famille, les notes prises a un cours de ce dernier, cours des mathematiques, il est vrai. Mais il a du suivre aussi des cours de philosophie." (Penser la guerre: Clausewitz, Paris: Gallimard, 1976, pp. 361 and 436-437.

[75].Michael Howard, Clausewitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 1.

> effectiveness. Strategy uses maps without worrying about trigonometrical surveys; it does not enquire how a country should be organised and a people trained and ruled in order to produce the best military results. It takes these matters as it finds them in the European community of nations. . . .[76]

This idea, which persists throughout his works, leads to the neglect of economic and technological factors in war and of the whole maritime dimension of warfare, which might have been beyond his ability. For him, it is not necessary to consider other aspects, which may be related to his subject of war, since the purpose of war, for him, is to destroy the enemy, to attain one's immediate political objective.

Finally, Clausewitz adopts history to support his theory of absolute war and real war. "Not only did Clausewitz shift back and forth between history and theory; his historical writings contain theoretical discussions, and his essays and chapters on theory are filled with historical materials."[77] His purpose of On War is not to provide new theories, principles, rules, and methods of conducting war, but to present what war really is, to illuminate the essential elements of war, which has long existed, and to trace it back to its basic elements. Accordingly, his historical writings cover wars in which he participated and others in which he did not, wars which occurred in his times and those which took

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[76]. Book II, ch. 2, p. 144.

[77]. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 328.

place earlier. His historical writings, in the words of Peter Paret, "focus on institutions, politics, and the influence of personality rather than on military operation."[78] The reason for this approach is that Clausewitz believes strongly that "historical examples clarify everything and also provide the best kind proof in the empirical sciences. This is particularly true of the art of war."[79] Therefore, Clausewitz emphasizes history, particularly the conflicts of the Frederican and Napoleonic eras, in order to obtain "the noblest and most solid nourishment."

On the other hand, Clausewitz's theory of absolute war and real war has shortcomings which lead one to reevaluate its validity and significance in the twentieth century. It is true that, theoretically, there is no absolute truth, and that it is also unfair to demand that Clausewitz formulate a theory which can meet contemporary requirements. However, from the theoretical point of view, his theory of war and politics seems to be somewhat simplified, one-sided, and extreme.

Firstly, Clausewitz overemphasizes the importance of violence--the destruction of the enemy in war--and incorrectly regards force as the best choice, while dening his own assertion that "in war many roads lead to success."[80] For him, war is organized mass violence in which force determines loser and winner. He seeks to

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78. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 332.

79. Book II, ch. 6, p. 170.

80. Book I, ch. 2, p. 94.

formulate his theory through historical examples in order to convince his readers, but his approach can not be considered a successful model, although the future wars appear to be absolute war, for as Liddell Hart has pointed out: "an intensive study of one campaign unless based on an extensive knowledge of the whole history of war is likely to lead us into pitfalls."[81] It seems that Clausewitz's approach to history does not fully support his argument, because he adopts examples which favour his theory, while ignoring other approaches in the settlement of armed conflicts between states. As a matter of fact, Thucydides' Peloponnesian War--the "Bible" for the study of war in the Western world--already provided ways other than violence in conflict resolution.[82] Unfortunately, Clausewitz does not pay attention to such historical evidence. On the other hand, his approach is also closely connected with his realist view of war. With regard to the examples he used in his works, he believes strongly that peace never dominates throughout the whole world, not even in a single continent like Europe. This realistic attitude towards war indicates his phenomenological approach which appears to be somewhat immature and overly simplified.[83]

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81. Liddell Hart, Strategy: Indirect Approach (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954) 25.

82. In his book, Thucydides (B.C. 460-400) described negotiation, arbitration, and good office in conflict resolution. (Peloponnesian War Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1987).

83. Peter Paret, Clausewitz and the State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976) 357-358.

Secondly, Clausewitz considers politics to be a major source of war and defines war merely as the continuation of politics by other means, whereas he pays less attention to economic functions in war although he mentions the relationship between government, treasuries, and war.[84] However, even in his own times, politics is not the only reason for war, since economic factors also play a signigicant role. As Edward Mead Earle states: "Trade is the source of finance and finance is the vital nerve of war."[85] With the rise of the national state, the expansion of Eastern and Western civilizations throughout the world, the industrial revolution, and the steady advance of military technology, politics, economics, and war are closely linked together. According to Edward Mead Earle, war was inherent in the mercantilist system, as it is in any system in which power is an end in itself, and economic life is mobilized primarily for political purpose.[86] From the realistic point of view, economics is another important source of war, not only in the contemporary world, but also in the underdeveloped seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Paul Kennedy points out: "The history of the rise and later fall of the leading countries in the Great Power system. . . . shows a very significant correlation over the longer term between productive and revenue raising capacities on the one

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84. Book VIII, ch. 3, pp. 587-592.

85. Edward Mead Earle, "Adam Smith, Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List: The Economic Foundations of Military Power," in Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 217.

86. Ibid., p. 219.

hand and military on the other."[87] Economic resources are necessary to support a large-scale military establishment and, in turn, military power provides the protection for further economic development. In reality, in both the long run and short run, economic factors are much more important in armed conflict than political reasons, especially in periods when politics was poorly understood. Because of his strategic myopia and his immediate political goal, Clausewitz naturally ignores the triangular relationship of economics, politics, and war. In this sense, his exclusive definition of politics and war seems to be extreme and unrealistic.

Finally, Clausewitz sees war as a political instrument, the character of which is completely determined by politics. In his logic, if politics is powerful and vigorous, so will be the war. In other words, the more powerful the politics, the more ferocious the war. Obviously, Clausewitz just sees one side of the coin and neglects the other: the more powerful the politics, the fewer the military conflicts between states; or, the stronger the military forces, the less developed the politics. However, other types of war less dominated by political objectives also exist in human history, especially in less developed societies where people fight with passion. Clausewitz's weakness is that he ignores the possibility that the positive function of politics may, in fact, prevent war, although he suggests positive and negative influences

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87. Paul Kennedy, The Rise and the Fall of the Great Powers (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988) xvi.

of politics on war. On this point, the fact that his dialectical model in On War does not totally work is strong evidence of his one-sidedness.

One must conclude, nevertheless, that war is an instrument used to lead to immediate political objectives and that politics determines the character of war, in which psychological elements predominate over physical force. By inference, Clausewitz tries to analyze the dialectical relationship between war and politics, to use an epistemological perspective to show the evolution of knowledge of war and to adopt historical examples that support his theory of war and politics. It is in accordance with this methodology that he defines war as a continuation of politics by other means.

The Impact of Clausewitz on Mao

> Politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed.[88]

Mao Zedong was influenced by Clausewitz's concept of war and politics in making his own military and political theory. This influence is obvious in his works which deal with Chinese communist strategy and tactics in the war against Japan, such as "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," "Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War against Japan," "On Protracted War," "Problems of War and Strategy," as well as in other essays. In these writings, Mao believes strongly that war is politics while politics is war.

The predominance of politics over war and the subordination of war to politics are, in fact, the salient feature of Mao's theory. In his view, politics, which is the policy of the government and the political party, is the soul of war and the leading factor in it and should govern every battle; and war is one of the instruments for achieving political objective. In theory, the differences in the circumstances of a war determine the difference in the laws guiding that war: the differences of time and space. According to his theory, psychological and moral factors or human dynamics play an active role in war; people, not weapons, are the decisive factor.

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88. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 153.

At the foundation of Mao's theory is dialectics, a feature which indicates that the poles of unity and disparity exist in his relationship between war and politics. These two aspects coexist in an entity and the one tends to change itself into the other. In this theoretical context, the similarities between Mao and Clausewitz can be traced to their approach to war and politics. Mao interprets Clausewitz's concept of absolute war as a realistic model showing that peace is temporary while war is inevitable. By extension, the struggle for survival becomes the core theme of Mao's political thought and runs through it for the rest of his life.[89]

In reality, the Chinese National War against Japan occurred in specific political, economic, military, social, and psychological conditions. This war is very closely associated with a modern political phenomenon--imperialism. The Japanese invasion and occupation of 1937 forced the Chinese to take up arms to fight against the aggressors. The main concern of this war was to get people to join in, to fight, and even to die in order to save their nation. Use of the people's zeal in both strategy and tactics was the main characteristic of the Chinese war against Japan. The dual objective of this war, in terms of communist strategy, was to drive

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89.Feng, Yulan, professor at Beijing University, indicates in The History of Modern Chinese Philosophy, vol. 7, that the core theme of contemporary Chinese philosophy is Mao's philosophical thought, for which there are two sources: Marxism and Chinese traditional philosophy. However, Mao's concept of "struggle through to the end" betraied that of "harmony" in traditional Chinese philosophy (People's Daily, Overseas Edition, Dec. 2, 1988, p. 2).

the foreign aggressors out of China, to help Mao to overthrow the Nationalist regime, and to establish his own government. Strategy, according to Mao, involved the waging of a people's war, which was, for him, the way to increase both his military and political power to the point where his forces could defeat the Japanese invaders and replace the dictatorship of Jiang Jieshi. Consequently, although regular warfare was the principal form of war and guerrilla warfare was an essential auxiliary. For this reason, the mobilization and arming of the people enjoyed priority in this war. Mao's approach to war and politics seems to be closely linked with Clausewitz's pattern, although the latter sees "people's war" more strictly as a tactic than as strategy.

However, Mao appears to share some philosophical ideas as well as some notions of strategy and tactics with Sun Zi and the Marxists. One must recognize that, from a nationalist point of view, it is easy for native Mao to understand Clausewitz, that the latter's ideas seem to him to be similar to those of Sun Zi, and that, in terms of political ideology, it is natural for Mao to accept Lenin's interpretation of On War. The similarities among Sun Zi, Lenin, and Clausewitz provide the theoretical, military, and political foundation for Mao to make use of Clausewitzian concepts of war and politics.

On reading On War, it may, indeed, be found that some Clausewitzian ideas coincide with Sun Zi's ideas about limited war, since Clausewitz's dialectical approach leads him to explore both limited and absolute war. The similarities between their thought

seem to be mainly in the areas of fundamental factors of war, winning without bloodshed, disruption of the enemy's alliances, and the need for high speed and low cost in military actions.

Firstly, in war, Sun Zi sees five factors as being the most important: Dao, chance, terrain, command, and doctrine.[90] In his view, (Chinese) politics, the uncertainty of war, geographical advantages, a general's qualities of genius, and logistics govern war. Likewise, Clausewitz stresses political priority over the military, chance, terrain,[91] the commander's genius and talent,[92] and maintenance and supply.[93] For him, war cannot depart from those fundamental elements.

Secondly, war in Sun Zi's times seems to be a limited war. Under the influence of such limited objectives, the core theme of Sun Zi's The Art of War is winning without fighting, that is to say, the exploration of other ways than the use of force in armed conflict resolution. Sun Zi argues: "For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."[94] For him,

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[90]. Ibid., p. 63.

[91]. Book IV, ch. 17, pp. 348-351.

[92]. Clausewitz, like Sun Zi, sees the importance of the harmonious relationship of a general and his army, mentioning the cohesion of the army, the soldier's respect and trust for his officers, and the solidarity of a brotherhood of general and soldiers. See: Book III, ch. 5, pp. 187-189.

[93]. Book IV, ch. 14, pp. 330-340.

[94]. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 77.

the best solution is without bloodshed. In like manner, Clausewitz deals with limited war in which he sees:

> War is the impact of opposing forces. It follows that the stronger force not only destroys the weaker, but that its impetus carries the weaker force along with it. This would seem not to allow a protracted, consecutive, employment of force: instead, the simultaneous use of all means intended for a given action appears as an elementary law of war.[95]

Here, Clausewitz claims the existence of this possibility--gaining without combat. "All means" used in conflict resolution, for him, may include peaceful means.

Thirdly, in accordance with this thought, Sun Zi asserts that the best strategy is to "disrupt his [the enemy's] alliances."[96] Wang Xi interprets this idea:

> Look into the matter of his alliances and cause them to be severed and dissolved. If an enemy has alliances, the problem is grave and the enemy's position strong; if he has no alliances the problem is minor and the enemy's position weak.[97]

According to Sun Zi, the state is at the centre of relations with other states. Armed conflict is caused by the unharmonious

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95. Book III, ch. 12, p. 205.

96. Sun Zi, The Art of War, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 78.

97. In his translation of Sun Zi's The Art of War, Samuel Griffith uses the edition with the paraphrase of Sun's verses by Eleven Schools. Their interpretation becomes part of the original text. Wang Xi, one of the schools in the Song Dynasty, was a Hanlin scholar and a government offical. Ibid., p. 78.

relationship between states. As for fears, states establish their own alliances in order to defend their common interests. States will be defeated with the disruption of their alliances. By understanding these relations, one can, in Sun's mind, win without combat. Similarly, Clausewitz also recognizes this possibility of achieving victory by using diplomacy. For him, reducing the sources of enemy strength is part of the plan of war. He writes:

> The distribution of the enemy's political power. If it lies in the armed forces of a single government, there will normally be no problem. If it is shared among allied armies, one of which is simply acting as an ally without a special interest of its own, the task is hardly any greater. But if it is shared among allies bound together by a common interest, the problem turns on the cordiality of the alliance.[98]

From his point of view, the disruption of the enemy's alliances will lead to total defeat of the enemy. This idea seems to coincide with that of Sun Zi.

Finally, in tactics, Sun Zi favours destroying the enemy on the battle-field in the shortest possible time, at the least possible cost, and with the fewest possible casualties. He states:

> When campaigning, be swift as the wind; in leisurely march, majestic as the forest; in raiding and plundering, like fire; in standing, firm as the mountains. As unfathomable as the clouds, move like a thunderbolt.[99]

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[98].Book VIII, ch. 9, p. 617.

[99].Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 106.

Speed, secrecy, and defeating the enemy without cost, in his view, appear to be the essential art of war. In much the same way, Clausewitz advises "to inflict heavy losses on the enemy at the low cost to himself [attacker]"[100] and to "act with the utmost speed."[101] These similarities between Sun Zi and Clausewitz seem to facilitate Mao's understanding of Clausewitz's On War.

On the other hand, Marx's and Engels' interests in Clausewitz and Lenin's intrepretation of On War also appear to be an important reason why Mao adopts some of Clausewitz's ideas. Indeed, Engels was greatly impressed by Clausewitz. In his letter to Marx in September 1857, he confessed:

> I'm now reading, among other things, Clausewitz's On War. An extraordinary way of philosophizing on these matters, but very good. On the question as to whether one ought to speak of the Art of War or the Science of War, his answer is that war is most like Commerce. Fighting is in war what cash payment is in trade, as seldom as it may in reality need to take place, everything is directed toward it, and in the end it must occur and decide the issue.[102]

Engels' interests also influenced Marx in his writings. Marx states: "On the occasion of writing my article on Blucher, I did some general reading of Clausewitz. The chap has a common sense

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[100].Book VI, ch. 9, p. 390.

[101].Book VIII, ch. 9, p. 617.

[102].Fredrick Engels, "Engels to Marx (Jan. 7, 1858)" in Marx-Engels Werke (Berlin: Dietz Verlage, 1963) XXIX, 252. See: Bernard Semmel, Marxism and the Science of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) 66.

that borders on brilliance."[103] The appreciation of Clausewitz by Marxist Fathers can be also traced in their military works. Engels deals with guerrilla warfare in an article published on November 11, 1870. Here, he writes that people should be encouraged to carry on guerrilla warfare, under the guidance of the the government involved in war, which advises the population in their fighting and gives them every possible assistance. Engels writes:

> It [is] at this time that Spain furnish[es] a glorious example of how a nation can resist an invading army. The military leaders of Prussia all [point] to it as an example worthy of the emulation of their compatriots. Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Clausewitz--all [are] of the same opinion."[104]

Engels' approach to guerrilla warfare seems to be Clausewitzian. With regard to orthodox Marxism, while working in the municipal library in Bern, Switzerland, in 1915, Lenin searches in Clausewitz's On War for general military ideas which coincide with fundamental Marxist assumptions. Lenin is fascinated by Clausewitz's socioeconomic view of the nature of war and his ideas on the relationship between war and politics, stating, for the first time in Marxist history, that "war is a continuation of policy by other means (violent means)," and called the chapter entitled "War is an Instrument of Politics" "the most important chapter." By scribbling heavy lines on both side of his quote,

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[103].Ibid., p. 66.

[104].Bernard Semmel, Marxism and the Science of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) 225-226.

Lenin draws particular attention to Clausewitz definition of war and politics as "war--part of a whole" and "this whole=politics." He quoted Clausewitz:

> It is presumed that politics unites in itself and harmonizes all interests of internal administration including that of humanity and whatever else philosophic intellect might present; for, indeed, politics is nothing per se but mere attorney of all these interests against other states.[105]

According to Lenin, the characteristics of war rely on the internal regime of the state conducting it. War, in the broader sense, reflects the internal and external politics of the belligerent country. Lenin writes in the margin that politics is "the representative of all the interests of the entire society." Clausewitz's definition of politics is, for Lenin, "an approach to Marxism." Lenin believes that "the character of the political aim has a decisive influence on the course of the war." . . . In his notes of Book VIII, ch. 2, Lenin highlightes "the enthusiasm of the masses" and "participation of the masses" in war. Consequently, he uses this idea in his military tactics and writes:

> Guerrilla warfare is an inevitable form of struggle at a time when the mass movement has actually reached the point of an uprising and when fairly large intervals occur between the big 'engagements' in the civil war.[106]

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[105] V.I. Lenin, "Notebook of Excerpts and Remarks on Carl von Clausewitz, On War and the Conduct of War" in V.V. Adoratskii, V.M. Molotov, and M.A. Savel'ev, eds., Leninskii sbornik (Lenin Miscellany), (2nd ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1931), XII, 389-452. Translated and edited by Donald E. Davis and Walter S.G. Kohn.

[106] V.I. Lenin. Collected Works, vol. 11, p. 220.

Lenin's formula indicates that guerrilla warfare is, for him, an auxiliary form of insurrection in the cities. This strategy focuses on the participation of masses, led by the working class. His ideas on guerrilla warfare seem to be based on Clausewitz's On War.

From Lenin's point of view, without understanding the politics of a given state and without understanding the relationship between politics and war, the proletariat cannot know what war is about. In this sense, he is more Clausewitzian than Marx or Engels. Marx and Engels, with an economic and political approach, present the relationship between war and revolution, whereas Lenin puts war at the centre of his analysis and, with a military approach, ascertains ties between politics and war. Because of such Marxist interests in Clausewitz, it appears to be natural for Mao as well to adopt certain of Clausewitz's concepts of war and politics.

This chapter will examine the impact of Clausewitz on Mao's thought and show the similarities between Mao and Clausewitz in their theoretical approach to war and politics. It will make clear how Mao synthesizes some of Clausewitz's ideas in the Chinese war against Japan.

Mao and Clausewitz

Clausewitz is one of the most popular Western military thinkers in China, although labelled a "bourgeois military theorist." His theory of war and politics and of the importance of

psychological elements has been held in high esteem not only by Chinese Communists, but also by Nationalists.[107] Such a high reputation laid a good foundation for the popularization of On War in Chinese military circles.[108]

Clausewitz's On War was introduced into China with the growth of Sino-Soviet relations and of Sino-German relations in the 1920s, although just how this introduction took place remains uncertain. The close ties with Russia and Germany attracted more Russians and Germans to serve in the Chinese army; and more Chinese students

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[107].In the early 1970s, when he visited Beijing, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was told of the high esteem in which Mao Zedong held the German philosopher of war--Clausewitz (Wilhelm von Schramm, "East and West Pay Homage to Father of Military Theorists," The German Tribune, June 8, 1980: 4).

In Taiwan, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), the former President of the Republic of China, was very much interested in Clausewitz. On his orders, the Translation Office of the Ministry of Defence produced the first complete Chinese version of On War in 1956. Most significantly, Jiang was the first reader of each first draft of the chapters and made notes as well as comments at the top of the pages. During the period of the translation, Jiang summoned the translator a dozen times to discuss the version. In the meetings, recalled the translator, Jiang called him "Master" rather than comrade (Leonard, Roger Ashley, A Short Guide to Clausewitz [Zhan Zheng Lun Jing Hua], edited and translated by Nue Xianzhong, Taipei: Jun Shi Ping Cui, 1976, pp. 1-4).

[108].From the Chinese point of view, "everything" from Germany was considered good, not only because of its advanced industry and technology, but also because of its strong nationalism and patriotism. After the honeymoon with the Soviet Union in 1927, the Nationalists turned to Germans for military assistance. The German government was pleased to reorganize the Chinese army along German lines. Among the German advisors, the most important figure was General Hans von Seeckt, the last of Germany's great military theorists and the best known German scholar in the study of Clausewitz, who served as Chief military advisor of Jiang Jieshi. Their outstanding performance won the lasting respect of the Chinese. China was thus psychologically receptive to German influence. See: Billie K. Walsh. "The German Military Mission in China, 1928-1939," Journal of Modern History, Sept. 1974.

went to Germany and the Soviet Union to study the social and natural sciences.[109] The culmination of these relations was the establishment of the Huangpu Military Academy, run by Chinese, Russians, and Germans.[110] This institution gave Chinese officers

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[109].Among ten Marshals of the People's Liberation Army, five of them studied military affairs in foreign countries. Marshal Zhu De in Germany and at the Frunze Military Academy of the Soviet Union, Marshal Chen Yin in France, Marshal Liu Baocheng at the Frunze Military Academy, Soviet Union, Marshal Nie Rongzhen in France and at the Red Army Academy, Soviet Union, and Marshal Xie Jianying at the Frunze Military Academy, Soviet Union.

Marshal Zhu De, Commander-in-Chief, was one of the most important figures among Chinese students. Zhu enrolled in the Political Science Faculty of Gottingen University in early 1923. He took private courses in military subject from a baron, who had once been a general in the Kaiser's army. Zhu also devoted himself to a systemic study of economic issues and international affairs. In June 1926, he went to Moscow where he entered the Frunze Military Academy. During his studies in Germany and Russia, he perhaps came into contact with Clausewitz's On War, because some ideas in his essays, published in the 1930s, were similar to those of Clausewitz; for example, Zhu claimed that leaders in war should have a politician's mind and should be good at combining military affairs with politics and economics. Specifically, he was the first to propose that guerrilla warfare should be the main tactic of the communists. In this respect, he has had considerable influence on Mao's strategy and tactics.

[110].The Huangpu Military Academy was set up in 1924. All the Russian advisors were from the Frunze Military Academy, where the study of Clausewitz's On War was a compulsory course. After the Soviet withdrawal from the Academy, the Germans took over the training programs in 1928. All German army manuals were modified to meet Chinese requirements. At the Huangpu Military Acedemy, the Chinese studied systemically the revolutionary military science. This military thought was accepted by both Nationalists and Communists. See: Liang Hsihuey, The Sino-German Connection, Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1978; A.I. Cherepanov, Notes of A Soviet Military Advisor, Taipei: Office of Military History, 1970; and Billie K. Walsh, "The German Military Mission in China, 1928-1938," Journal of Modern History, Sept. 1974.

the opportunity to know Clausewitz.[111]

There is a strong evidence that Mao read Clausewitz's On War. By the end of 1935, the Red Army, led by Mao, arrived in Yenan. In seeking theoretical formulations of the strategies and tactics for Chinese revolution, Mao did extensive and intensive research on Chinese and Western philosophy. As there was no complete Chinese version of On War at this time, he read extracts of it from March 18 to April 1, 1938.[112]After his theoretical study, Mao delivered a series of lectures, from May 26 to June 3, 1938, entitled "On

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[111].Four of ten Marshals of the People's Liberation Army were from the Huangpu Military Academy: two graduates, Marshal Xu Xiangqin and Marshal Lin Biao and two instructors, Marshal Nie Rongzhen and Marshal Yie Jianying (both Nie and Yie also studied in France and the Soviet Union).

[112]. The Research Bureau of Documentation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: Notes on the Philosophy of Mao Zedong (Beijing: Documentary Press of the Central Committee, 1988) 282-283.

The first complete Chinese version of On War was published by the Ministry of Defense in Taiwan in 1956. However, the first five books were translated by Mr. Zhang Peting, director of the Translation Office under the Ministry of Defence, using the Japanese copy of On War; and the last three books were translated by Mr. Nue Xianzhong, successor of Mr. Zhang and director of the Translation Office, in accordance with O.J.M. Jolles' translation. Neither of the translators could understand his colleague's working language; moreover, there was no other copy in translation available. Mr. Nue admitted that contradictions and errors existed in the final draft because the translators had used different sources and because he could not find a good English edition of On War. See: Zhan Zheng Lun (On War), Taipei: the Ministry of Defense, 1956, pp. 1-5.

The second complete Chinese version, the first one in Mainland China, was translated by the Military Academy of the People's Liberation Army in Beijing in 1978. This edition was mainly based on Vom Kriege, published by the Ministry of National Defense, Berlin, 1957, with references to earlier Russian, Japanese, English, French, and Chinese translations. See: Zhan Zheng Lun (On War), BeiJing: Shang Wu Yin Shu Guan, 1978.

Protracted War," at the "Yenan Association for the Study of the War of Resistance against Japan." This study, considered a masterpiece, was regarded by Clausewitzian scholars as an example in which Clausewitz's ideas were used in modern Chinese war, although Mao never indicated in his notes that he took such concepts from On War.

It was in his On Guerrilla Warfare that Mao formally employed Clausewitz's ideas.[113] Some of Clausewitz's ideas in Mao's works can, however, be found in "On the Rectification of Incorrect Ideas in the Party," published in December 1929.[114]

It appears clearly, therefore, that Mao was familiar with Clausewitz through both direct and indirect channels. In order to wage the Chinese War against Japan, he synthesized Clausewitz's ideas and formulated his own theory.

War

"War [is the] monster of mutual slaughter among men. . . . But there is only one way to eliminate it and this is to oppose war

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113. Mao Zedong, On Guerrilla Warfare (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1961) 49.

114. This document is a resolution written for the Ninth Conference of the Party Organization of the Fourth Army of the Red Army in December 1929. Since then, the Chinese People's Armed Forces have made tremendous progress and innovations in their Party activities and political work, but the basic line in such activities and work remains the same as that laid down in this resolution. See: Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd, 1954) 105-115.

with war."[115] The Chinese People's War, led by the Communist Party, was an absolute war, which saw to the attainment of its political interests as the seizure of power by the use of armed force. In order to examine the means by which this goal could be reached, Mao adopted a dialectical approach to show that the destruction of the enemy and the preservation of oneself were the very essence of the People's War. Moreover, for Mao, the richest source of the war lay in the people. The moral and psychological, rather than the material, force of the people was seen by him as a decisive factor.

"The object of war," he writes, "is specifically to 'preserve oneself and destroy the enemy' (to destroy the enemy means to disarm him or 'deprive him of the power to resist,' and does not mean to destroy every menber of his forces physically)."[116] War, according to Mao, is a clash of interests between states or political groups and such conflict should be settled by force. In order to describe the peculiarity of war, Mao compares war with clearing a house, where the dust cannot be removed if people are not made to clean up the room. The same thing happens in war: The opponent may not automatically surrender his arms, unless he is under strong military pressure. For this reason, Mao emphasizes that "all the issues between two hostile armes depend on war for

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115. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I, (Beijing: Foreign Laguages Press, 1967) 182.

116. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 156.

their solution."[117] He further states:

> The object of war is the essence of war and the basis of all war activities, an essence which pervades all war activities, from the technical to the strategic. The object of war is the underlying principle of war, and no technical, tactical, or strategic concepts or principles can in any way depart from it.[118]

According to Mao, the destruction of the enemy is the only effective means to reach the objective of war, and it dominates the whole process of war.

From Clausewitz's point of view, there are positive and passive reasons for disarming the enemy: destruction and preservation. "These two efforts," he writes, "always go together; they interact. They are integral parts of a single purpose. . . ."[119] The positive purpose is to destroy the enemy. Such action will lead to the final result, the enemy's collapse. On the other hand, the passive purpose involves fighting for the preservation of oneself and waiting for the chance to vanquish the opponent. The aim of annihilating the opponent remains constant, although there is a difference between destruction and preservation.

Mao adopts this idea in his explanation of the purpose of war. The objective of war, he says, determines that "all our strategic and operational directives are formulated on the basis of

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[117].ibid., p. 232.

[118].ibid., pp. 156-157.

[119].On War, Book I, ch. 2, p. 98.

fighting,"[120] although there are other approaches to the settlement of war. In his theory, Mao holds that "in the process of development of a complex thing, many contradictions exist; among these, one is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of other contradictions."[121] Moreover, in the relationship between two sides of one contradiction, the dominant side determines the nature of the subordinate one, which is used as an auxiliary means to reach the goal. The characteristic of one matter is determined by the dominant side of the contradiction. Similarly, war, which is characterized by violence, means bloodshed, because each belligerent attempts to destroy his rival. This characteristic of war means that annihilation of the enemy is the primary approach to achieving victory, although secondary peaceful means exist in war. If war loses its use of physical force, there is no longer the concept of war in reality. Hence, Mao concludes, "destruction of the enemy is the primary object of war and self-preservation the secondary, because only by destroying the enemy in large numbers can one effectively preserve oneself."[122]

Mao believes that "the phenomenon of war is more elusive and is characterized by greater uncertainty than any other social

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120. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I, (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 244.

121. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 35.

122. ibid., p. 156.

phenomenon, in other words, that it is more a matter of 'probability.'"[123] Because of differences of space and time and the variety of the conflicts between people, every war has its own particularity, making war uncertain. For Mao, the peculiar nature of war makes it impossible in many cases to have full knowledge about both sides, hence, the uncertainty about military conditions and operations, which results in mistakes and defeats. Like Clausewitz, Mao sees that war is both objective and subjective. He quotes Clausewitz to explain this fact: "Clausewitz wrote, in On War: wars in every period have independent forms and independent conditions, and, therefore, every period must have its own independent theory of war."[124]

Since this is so, in Mao's mind, it is necessary to study these particularities of war if one wants to attain the predetermined goal of the state involved in war. The Chinese War is waged in the special environment of China and, compared with the universal theory of war, it has its own singularity. Therefore, neither foreign nor Chinese theories of war can be mechanically applied to the Chinese War against Japan.

In war, the crux lies precisely in making the subjective and objective correspond as closely as possible. In seeking victory, a commander can not overstep the limitations imposed by the objective conditions. Within this limited environment, he can and

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[123].ibid., p. 164.

[124].Mao Zedong, On Guerrilla Warfare, translated and with an Introduction by Samuel B. Griffith, (New York: Praeger, 1961) 49.

must play a dynamic role in striving for victory. According to Mao, the commander's correct dispositions ensue from correct decisions, which rely on correct judgement. Such judgement springs from comprehensive and indispensable reconnaissance and from systematic deliberation on the various data gathered through such reconnaissance. Employing all possible and necessary methods of reconnaissance, a commander subjects to deliberation various data thus gathered about the enemy's situation; he discards the crude and selects the refined, eliminates the false and retains the true, proceeding from one point to another, from the outside to the inside. Additionally, he takes into account the conditions on his own side, and studies the differences and similarities between the two sides, thereby forming his judgement, making up his mind and mapping out his plan.[125]

Clearly, this idea is similar to Clausewitz's critical analysis. His "critical analysis being the application of theoretical truths to actual events, it not only reduces the gap between the two but also accustoms the mind to these truths through their repeated application."[126] Significantly, both Mao and Clausewitz attempt to reduce the gap between subjectivity and objectivity.

As a result of this gap, Clausewitz focuses on psychological elements in war in order to reduce the conflict between theory and

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[125]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I. (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 185.

[126].Book II, ch. 5, p. 156.

practice. In On War, he writes:

> The moral elements are among the most important in war. They constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole, and at an early stage they establish a close affinity with the will that moves and leads the whole mass of force, practically merging with it, since the will is itself a moral quality. . . History provides the strongest proof of the importance of moral factors and their often incredible effects. . . .[127]

According to him, psychological factors, as opposed to physical elements, are one of the most important components in war. Following Clausewitz, Mao puts human dynamics in a very important position in his strategy. Mao holds that in the development of history as a whole, it is the material that determines the moral and psychological, while the moral and psychological react to the material. Psychological factors, in reality, reflect the morale of all the people of the state. This deduction that the people are the decisive element runs throughout Mao's revolutionary theory:

> Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is people, not things, that are decisive. The contest of strength is not only a contest of military and economic power, but also a contest of human power and morale. Military and economic power is necessarily wielded by the people.[128]

In Mao's analysis, the psychological and moral force of the people is the most important factor in war, although weapons and

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[127].Book III, ch. 3, pp. 184-185.

[128]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Langauges Press, 1967) 143-144.

economics play an active role. For this reason, Mao emphasizes the dynamics of the people. As he states,

> It is a human characteristic to excercise a conscious dynamic role. Man strongly displays this characteristic in war. True, victory or defeat in war is decided by the military, political, economic, and geographical conditions on both sides, the nature of the war each side is waging and the international support each enjoys, but it is not decided by these alone; in themselves, all these provide only the possibility of victory or defeat but do not decide the issue. To decide the issue, subjective effort must be added, namely, the directing and waging of war, man's conscious dynamic role in war.[129]

From Mao's point of view, the dynamic role of the people prevails not only in war but also in every human activity. His purpose is, therefore, to convince the people that psychological and moral force can and will triumph over physical force. In order to mobilize the whole nation to join in the war, he seeks to explore nationalism and patriotism. Mao emphasizes: "We must inspire ourselves with the most resolute spirit of unyielding struggle, with the most burning patriotic sentiments, and with the will to endurance, and carry out a protracted struggle against the enemy."[130] From his point of view, psychological and moral factors will become a powerful weapon in the war against Japan. Therefore, Mao, like Clausewitz, recommends the use of psychological and moral force in order to remedy the shortage in arms.

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[129].ibid., p. 152.

[130].Stuart R. Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tsetung, (New York: Praeger, 1976) 285.

Consequently, Mao synthesizes Clausewitz's approach in order to convince the people to wage a protracted war. As Clausewitz writes:

> A government must never assume that its country's fate, its whole existence, hangs on the outcome of a single battle, no matter how decisive. . . . No matter how small and weak a state may be in comparison with its enemy, it must not forego these last efforts, or one would conclude that its soul is dead. . . . They are even more desirable when help can be expected from other states that have an interest in our survival. A government that after having lost a major battle is only interested in letting its people go back to sleep in peace as soon as possible, and, overwhelmed by feelings of failure and disappointment, lacks the courage and desire to put forth a final effort is, because of its weakness, involved in a major inconsistency in any case. It shows that it did not deserve to win, and possibly for that very reason was unable to.[131]

This passage provides a framework for Mao to criticize the theories of a quick victory and national subjugation. Mao holds that the adherents of the theory of a quick victory are wrong since they ignore the contrast between the Japanese strength and the Chinese weakness and exaggerate China's advantages, whereas the national subjugationists just see the Chinese loss at the beginning of the war and overemphasize the Japanese superiority in military and economic areas. Therefore, Mao concludes: "The only way to win ultimate victory lies in a strategically protracted war."[132]

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[131].Book VI, ch. 26, p. 483.

[132]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 180.

Further, he claims,

> The mobilization of the common people throughout the country will create a vast sea in which to drown the enemy, create the conditions that will make up for our inferiority in arms and other things, and create the prerequisites for overcoming every difficulty in the war.[133]

In this sense, the strategy of a people's war is to wage a protracted war rather than "a single short blow." Accordingly, the basic conditions for a people's war focus on five elements. Firstly, the war against Japan occurs inside of semi-colonial and semi-feudal China, which is a big, but poor and backward state. Secondly, because of its military, economic, and political weakness, compared to its opponent, it is impossible for China to win a quick victory. Thirdly, geographically, the theatre of the war is so vast that it is possible for the Chinese army to conduct mobile warfare more effectively. Fourthly, the growing latent power of resistance will be brought into play and large numbers of people will pour into the front lines to fight for their freedom. Thus, this war will be developed into a war of total resistance by the whole nation. Finally, it is necessary to establish revolutionary bases across the country in order to effectively wage a protracted war.

Mao's approach to a people's war, except for the last element, corresponds closely to Clausewitz's pattern. The latter lists the following conditions for conducting a people's war.

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[133] ibid., p. 154.

> 1. The war must be fought in the interior of the country.
> 2. It must not be decided by a single stroke.
> 3. The theater of operation must be fairly large.
> 4. The national character must be suited to that type of war.
> 5. The country must be rough and inaccessible, because of mountains, or forests, or the local methods of cultivation.[134]

The views of Mao and Clausewitz on the conduct of a people's war are so close that some of their strategy and tactics share the same features. In strategy, both men maintain that the main form of this war is defense and that it should be a protracted war. In tactics, the basic principle is to harass the enemy and to wait for the chance to destroy him.

According to Clausewitz, the forms of defense should be strategically transformed into a counterattack, when the defender gains his advantages. As he points out:

> Even when the only point of the war is to maintain the status quo, the fact remains that merely parrying a blow goes against the essential nature of war, which certainly does not consist merely in enduring. Once the defender has gained an important advantage, defense as such has done its work. While he is enjoying this advantage, he must strike back, or he will court destruction. . . . This transition to the counterattack must be accepted as a tendency inherent in defense--indeed, as one of its essential features.[135]

Starting out from these principles, Mao divides protracted war into three stages: strategic defensive, strategic stalemate, and

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[134].Book VI, ch. 26, p. 480.

[135].Book VI, ch. 5, p. 370.

strategic offensive. In the first stage, the fact that Japan is a strong country and is attacking, while China is weak and is defending itself, makes the war strategically a defensive and protrated war for the Chinese. On the other hand, although the enemy is strong, it is numerically small, compared to the population size of the invaded country. Additionally, the enemy's overextended attack will lead to the exhaustion of its finance and economy. Flagging morale, war weariness, and pessimism will appear in the enemy's troops. During this period, the Chinese army, in a posture of positive defense, waits for the chance to attack the enemy.

In the second stage, Japan's shortage of troops and China's firm resistance force the attackers to halt their offensive in order to safeguard the occupied areas. This period, in Mao's view, is a transitional stage, the most difficult one of the entire war, but a turning point. Mobile warfare is the main form of defense and guerrilla warfare is an auxiliary form during this period.

In the third stage, the Chinese begin the strategic counteroffensive and recover the lost territories. The primary form of fighting is mobile warfare, but positional warfare will soon rise to importance. The decisive battle leading to ultimate victory will belong to the Chinese.

From his strategic point of view, Mao believes that only a great number of tactical victories can lead to great strategic victory. The tendency of people's war is to effect a shift in the balance of power: China moves from defense to offense and from

inferiority to superiority, whereas Japan experiences the reverse of this trend. In the relationship between strategic defense and offense, Mao and Clausewitz seem to take the same position. As Clausewitz states:

> The Russians [in 1812] showed us that one often attains one's greatest strength in the heart of one's own country, when the enemy's offensive power is exhausted and the defensive can then switch with enormous energy to the offensive.[136]

Mao chooses this same historical example in his On Guerrilla Warfare in order to convince the Chinese that the current situation will be changed and that the ultimate victory belongs to the Chinese. Mao writes,

> In September, 1812, the Frenchman Napoleon. . . . invaded Russia at the head of a great army totaling several hundred thousand infantry, cavalry, and artillery. At that time, Russia was weak and her ill-prepared army was not concentrated. The most important phase of her strategy was the use made of . . . . detachments of peasants to carry on guerrilla operations. . . . When the French Army was withdrawing, cold and starving, Russian guerrillas blocked the way and , in combination with regular troops, carried out counterattacks on the French rear, pursuing and defeating them.[137]

In his tactics, Mao emphasizes guerrilla and mobile warfare. His famous formula is that "the enemy advances, we retreat; the

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[136].Book III, ch. 17, p. 220.

[137].Mao Zedong, On Guerrilla Warfare (New York: Praeger, 1961) 58-59.

enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; and the enemy retreats, we pursue."[138] This tactic is similar to Clausewitz's pattern of defense, without concrete resistance, but with concentration of forces at the right time and at the right place: "We can use our forces to frustrate the enemy's intention. . . .[our] ultimate aim can only be to prolong the war until the enemy is exhausted."[139] Clausewitz believes that guerrilla warfare in a defensive war, in which the defender is much weaker than attacker, is mainly intended to wear down the enemy. That means "using the duration of the war to bring about a gradual exhaustion of his [the enemy's] physical and moral resistance."[140] Further, Clausewitz points out:

> Once the victor is engaged in sieges, once he has left strong garrisons all along the way to form his line of communication, or has even sent out detachments to secure his freedom of movement and keep adjoining provinces from giving him trouble; once he has been weakened by a variety of losses in men and material, the time has come for the defending army to take the field again. Then a well-placed blow on the attacker in his difficult situation will be enough to shake him.[141]

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[138].This formula of guerrila tactics was firstly proposed by Marshal Zhu De, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, in May 1928. Mao adopted this concept in his Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War to illuminate the relationship of defense and offense (Red Flag, no. 23, 1986: 4) and also see: Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I, (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd, 1954) 212.

[139].Book I, ch. 2, p. 98.

[140].Book I, ch. 2, p. 93.

[141].Book VI, ch. 26, p. 483.

This similarity to Mao in relation to guerrilla tactics results in the same conclusion, i.e., guerrilla warfare is an auxiliary form of defensive war. Its main task, in Clausewitz, is to "nibble at the shell and around the edges" or to harass the enemy rather than to "pulverize the core." Obviously, the coordination between regular and guerrilla forces is necessary, since "without these regular troops to provide encouragement, the local inhabitants will usually lack the confidence and initiative to take to arms. The stronger the units detailed for the task, the greater their power of attraction and the bigger the ultimate avalanche."[142] Similarly, according to Mao, "in the anti-Japanese war as a whole, regular warfare is primary and guerrilla warfare supplementary, for only regular warfare can decide the final outcome of the war."[143] Guerrilla warfare, waged behind the enemy's lines, is intended to cripple the enemy, pin him down, and disrupt his supply lines. Thus, guerrilla surprise attacks, which inflict physical and psychological damage on the enemy, support the regular troops, and in turn, the victories of the regular army will encourage the guerrilla's fighting. The army, guerrilla forces, and the people are the foundation of victory.

Mao's approach to war, particularly its objective, his theory of war, the role and importance of psychological and moral elements, and his ideas on guerrilla strategy and tactics, seem to

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[142].Book VI, ch. 26, p. 482.

[143]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 229.

be Clausewitzian in nature. The fact that quotations, examples, and ideas of Clausewitz appear in Mao's works, in addition to the theoretical similarities, provides strong evidence for this conclusion.

Politics

"War is the continuation of politics," quotes Mao in his essay. According to him, "war is politics and war itself is a political action; since ancient times there has never been a war that did not have a political character."[144] All of war is inseparable from politics and people fight for a specific political goal, which is also the military aim. In China, from Mao's point of view, the anti-Japanese war is a national war waged by the whole nation, and victory is inseparable from the political aim of the war--to drive out Japanese imperialism and to build a new China. In this sense, politics means the policy of the government--the Nationalist government. In other words, the Chinese War against Japan is under the leadership of the Nationalist, whose political goal is to drive the Japanese out of China. Its military objective is subordinate to the political objective.

Clausewitz regards "policy as representative of all interests of the community."[145] In this sense, "war [is] still an affairs for

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[144].ibid., p. 152.

[145].Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 607..

government alone."[146] Similarly, Mao synthesizes this idea that considers the Chinese War against Japan as a whole of the national interests. Furthermore, he voluntarily abandons his Marxist approach to war and politics so that he acknowledges the Nationalist leadership. As he writes:

> (1) the Communist-led government in the Shensi-[G]ansu-Ning[x]ia revolutionary base area will be renamed the Government of the Special Region of the Republic of China and the Red Army will be redesignated as part of the National Revolutionary Army, and they will come under the direction of the Central Government in Nan[j]ing and its Military Council respectively;
> (2) a thoroughly democratic system will be applied in the areas under the Government of the Special Region;
> (3) the policy of overthrowing the [G]uomin[d]ang by armed force will be discontinued; and,
> (4) the confiscation of the land of the landlords will be discontinued.[147]

It seems that Mao explicitly recognizes the legal status of the Nationalist government in Chinese politics. Moreover, he also sees the "Three People's Principles"(Nationalism, Democracy, and People's Livelihood) as the national political ideology rather than the Communist. He confirms that "Does the Communist Party agree with the Three People's Principles? Our answer is, Yes, we do."[148] Mao superficially acceptes that Jiang Jishi must be the titular

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[146].Book VIII, ch. 3, p. 583.

[147]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) p. 269.

[148].ibid., p. 270.

leader of China in the war and even he goes very far in recognizing the leading role of the Nationalist, not only during the Anti-Japanese War, but in the phase of national reconstruction which will follow it.[149] These facts show that Mao treats politics as the policy of the government. On the other hand, the Nationalist never exercises its effective authority over the Communist areas.

Like Clausewitz, Mao emphasizes the primacy of political over the military concerns. He criticizes the pure military view, which asserts the opposition of military and political work, which refuses to recognize military work as only one of the means to attain the political objective, and even regards military work as leading political work. Mao maintains:

> The Chinese Red Army is an armed force for carrying out the political tasks of the revolution. Especially at the present time, certainly the Red Army exists not merely to fight but to agitate the masses, to organize them, to arm them, and to help them establish revolutionary political power; apart from such objectives, fighting loses its meaning and the Red Army the reason for its existence."[150]

The political nature of war determines its military nature. In war, all activity centers on the political objective. As Clausewitz asserts,

> What the theorist has to say here is this: one must keep the dominant characteristics of both belligerents in mind. Out of those characteristics a certain centre of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement,

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[149].Stuart R. Schram, Mao Zedong, (Hong Kong: the Chinese University Press, 1983) 32.

[150].Ibid., p. 106.

> on which everything depends. That is the point at which all our energies should be directed.[151]

In his view, this centre is the policy of the state involved in war, and on it is based all military activity. The defeat and destruction of the enemy is the effective means to carry out the state's policy. Mao takes the same approach in illuminating the Chinese political objective in the war against Japan:

> In directing the anti-Japanese war, leaders at the various levels must lose sight neither of the contrast between the fundamental factors on each side nor of the object of this war. In the course of military operations these contrasting fundamental factors unfold themselves in the struggle by each side to preserve itself and destroy the other. In our war we strive in every engagement to win a victory, big or small, and to disarm a part of the enemy and destroy a part of his men and materiel. We must accumulate the results of these partial destructions of the enemy into major strategic victories and so achieve the final political aim of expelling the enemy, protecting the motherland and building a new China.[152]

Adopting this Clausewitzian idea, Mao emphasizes that, in war, force remains the best way to attain the political end, which determines the nature of war.

Clausewitz believes that, "although one single inhabitant of a theater of operations has as a rule no more noticeable influence on the war than a drop of water on a river, the collective

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[151].Book VIII, ch. 4, pp. 595-596.

[152]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 157.

influence of the country's inhabitants is far from negligeable."[153] The unity of the people will be a decisive factor especially in a defensive war. The people's support can provide a reservoir of strength for the conduct of war and also all the material that the army needs. Clausewitz takes Spain's example to explain the importance of the people's aid, stating that, "as in Spain, the war is primarily waged by the people, it will be understood that we are dealing not simply with an intensification of popular support but with a genuine new source of power."[154]

In the same way, Mao sees that the political mobilization of the people to join in the war enjoys priority in the Chinese War against Japan.

> The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people. It is mainly because of the unorganized state of the Chinese masses that Japan dares to bully us. When this defect is remedied, then the Japanese aggressor, like a mad bull crashing into a ring of flames, will be surrounded by hundreds of millions of our people standing upright, the mere sound of their voices will strike terror into him, and he will be burned to death.[155]

Mao suggests that the unity of all the Chinese people will be a strong deterrent to the Japanese invaders, that such deterrence will lead to strong psychological pressure on the enemy and, on the other hand, to encouragement of the people to fight for the final

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[153].Book VI, ch. 6, p. 373.

[154].Book VI, ch. 6, p. 373.

[155]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 186.

victory.

Similarly, Clausewitz states that "the people who have not yet been conquered by the enemy will be the most eager to arm against him; they will set an example that will gradually be followed by their neighbors. The flames will spread like a brush fire. . . ."[156] Such armed people will actively harass the enemy and set him on "fire." After the surprise attack, they will scatter and vanish in all directions. In Clausewitz's view, "any nation that uses [the people's war] intelligently will, as a rule, gains some superiority over those who disdain its use."[157]

Mao stresses the arming of the people--the organization of the guerrilla forces. "All the people of both sexes from the ages of sixteen to forty-five," according to Mao, "must be organized into anti-Japanese self-defense units, the basis of which is voluntary service."[158] From Mao's point of view, this expansion of the people's armed forces is to be developed in three forms--self-defense units, guerrilla forces, and the regular army--which constitutes the three tiered structure of the people's war. This development is compared to a China that "is littered all over with dry firewood which will soon be kindled into a conflagration."[159] In

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156.Book VI, ch. 26, p. 481.

157.Book VI, ch. 26, p. 479.

158.Mao Zedong, On Guerrilla Warfare, (New York: Praeger, 1961) 80.

159. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I, (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 121.

China, as it stands, this development is not merely a possibility in his mind, but an inevitability. In the long term, the Chinese people will certainly defeat the Japanese aggressors, although the Chinese are much weaker than the Japanese.

On the other hand, politics, in Clausewitz, also means the establishement of alliances with other states. The defender's allies may be his ultimate source of support. In this respect, Clausewitz asserts:

> Most states will certainly assume that the collective interest will always represent and assure their stability. It is thus also certain that in defending itself every individual state whose relations with the rest are not already strained will find that it has more friends than enemies.[160]

The common interests of the states concerned, in his view, will lead to a substantial effort towards maintaining the integrity of their ally's country. When a weak state is invaded by a strong state, it is easy for the weak one to gain support from not only its alliances but also from a number of civilized countries.

In the same way, Mao analyzes the relations of China with the international community in relation to the Chinese War. For him, while Japan can get international support from fascist countries, the international opposition that it is bound to encounter will be greater than its international support. Such opposition will gradually grow and eventually not only cancel out the support but even bear down upon Japan itself. However, in the existing

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[160].Book VI, ch. 6, p. 374.

international situation, China is not isolated in the war. Mao claims that "the existence of the Soviet Union is a particularly vital factor in present-day international politics, and the Soviet Union will certainly support China with the greatest enthusiasm."[161] From the geopolitical point of view, Mao believes that the close ideological and geographical relationship of China and the Soviet Union will challenge Japan and facilitate China's war of resistance.

In the broader sense, Mao insists that war be an instrument of politics, which may be divided into internal and external forms. The internal politics involves the mobilizing and arming of the people, under the leadership of the government, in order to achieve the final victory over the enemy. On the other hand, the external politics implies the gaining of support from the international community or from one's alliances. Both will lay a solid foundation of psychological and material support for the total destruction of the enemy. Therefore, the unity of the people, the army, and the government is the essential and decisive factor in the war.

War and Politics

Clausewitz's approach to war and politics may have prompted Mao to reassess his own concept. For him, the Chinese War against Japan is a revolutionary war of all Chinese nationalities, whose military objective cannot be isolated from its political objective.

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161. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 126.

In this sense, Mao concludes that "politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed." This theme remains paramount in Mao's thought for the rest of his life and resembles his dictum that "political power comes from the barrel of a gun." As for his revolutionary doctrine, Mao believes revolution to be permanent and war to be a lasting phenomenon in human society until the realisation of world communism. From his theoretical point of view, unity and disparity remain in the relations between war and politics. They interpenetrate and oppose each other.

As shown above, Clausewitz holds that war and politics are closely connected; without the political goal, war would be devoid of sense. As he writes:

> The main lines along which military events progress, and to which they are restricted, are political lines that continue throughout the war into the subsequent peace. . . . Is war not just another expression of their thought, another form of speech or writing? Its grammer, indeed, may be its own, but not its logic. If that is so, then war cannot be divorced from political life; and whenever this occurs in our thinking about war, the many links that connect the two elements are destroyed and we are left with something pointless and devoid of sense.[162]

Indeed, war, the destruction of the enemy, is linked with politics, the aim of war, which defines the form of military activity. The political factor of war governs the war, the campaign, and the engagement. On the other hand, the particularity of the specific engagement tends to invalidate this general

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[162].Book VIII, ch. 6, p. 605.

principle, because all aspects of the battle are not directly related to the final, political goal. This dualistic, yet unified nature of war and politics indicates that, in the broader sense, war is the continuation of politics by other means.

Mao expresses the same idea as Clausewitz. He states:

> But war has its own particular characteristics and in this sense it cannot be equated with politics in general. 'War is the continuation of politics by other means.' When politics develops to a certain stage beyond which it cannot proceed by the usual means, war breaks out to sweep the obstacles from the way. . . . It can therefore be said that politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed.[163]

Mao's approach suggests that the unity of war and politics means interpermeation, interdependence, and interconnection. Each of the two aspects, according to the specific condition, tends to transform itself into the other. The two contradictory aspects, throughout the whole process of war, exclude each other and oppose each other. However, a contradictory aspect cannot exist in isolation. Without the other aspect which is opposed to it, each aspect loses the condition of its existence. In this sense, war is the means to defend China's independence, sovereignty, and integrity. Such purpose is inseparable from the political objective. For this reason, war is politics. On the other hand, the normal political approach cannot drive the Japanese out of China. Politics must use forcible means to achieve its end. Therefore,

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163. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 153.

politics is war.

It is evident that Mao shares Clausewitz's dialectical approach to the study of war and politics. The same theoretical methodology leads to the same conclusion: war is the continuation of politics by other means.

Conclusion

Clausewitz's influence on Mao centers on the importance of politicized war, psychological and moral factors, and people's war, which compose the core theme of Mao's thought and which, in Mao's words, become the key concepts of "putting politics in command," "the human dynamic role," and "the mobilization of the people." Strategically, Mao's theory of war and politics is more directly dependent on Clausewitz than on Sun Zi and the Marxist leaders.

Evidence of Clausewitz's predominant influence can be seen in Mao's works. In war, Mao believes strongly that fighting is the only means to destroy the enemy and to reach the political objective of war. This idea of absolute war, which runs throughout Mao's writings, may be explored in his famous poem, written a few days after the Communist forces captured Nanjing, the capital of the Nationalist Government, on April 23, 1949:

> Over [Mount] Zhong swept a storm, headlong,
> Our mighty army, a million strong, has crossed the [Yanytze] river.
> The city, a tiger crouching, a dragon curling, outshines its ancient glories; In heroic triumph heaven and earth have been overturned.
> With power and to spare we must pursue the tottering foe.
> And not ape [Xiang] Yu the conqueror seeking idle fame.

> Were Nature sentient, she too would pass from youth to age.
> But Man's world is mutable, seas become mulberry fields.[164]

Here, Mao proposes that the Communists should avoid committing the same mistake as the Tyrant of Chu--a reference to Xiang Yu, who spared the life of Liu Pang, the future founder of the Han Dynasty, when he had Liu in his power, only to be ultimately destroyed by the rival whom he had allowed to live. Mindful of the historical lesson, Mao orders that the People's Liberation Army resolutely, thoroughly, and completely wipe out all Nationalist troops, although some people, including Stalin, proposed that the Communists should be content with separate regimes in North and South China and should not provoke American intervention.

This idea of Mao on combat and protracted war seems to be different from that of Sun Zi and certain Marxist leaders. In strategy, Sun Zi holds that "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill,"[165] and he tries to find other ways besides violence, which is to be used only when there is no alternative. Most importantly, his strategy focuses on offense rather than defense. Hence, Sun strongly opposes the defensive, protracted war, because "there has never been a protracted war from which a country

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[164] Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong Poems (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1976) 25-26.

[165] Sun Zi, The Art of War, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 77.

has benefited."[166] He believes that fighting is to be a trial of spirit, genius, talent, and ability, rather than only a matter of force. Winning the war without much fighting, for Sun, is the best way. One can benefit from a surprise attack and a short blow, rather than from a protracted war, when one's opponent exhausts his strength and his morale declines. Sun's strategy centers on a combination of deception and attack.

In contrast to Sun Zi, Marx and Engels stress violence in the struggle of the working class against the ruling class. From their point of view, revolution is the forcible action of one class overthrowing another. In the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Marx and Engels state that the proletariat's ends can be attained only by the forcible "overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy and conquest of political power." With regard to this assumption, insurrection in the cities appears to enjoy priority in Marxist military strategy. As Engels states,

> Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war. . . . and subject to certain rules of proceeding. . . . Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. . . . Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising . . . .In the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known, de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace.[167]

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[166].ibid. p. 73.

[167]. Frederick Engels, Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution (New York: International Publisher, 1933) 100.

Such orthodox military approach should, from the Marxist point of view, be the universal truth for guiding revolutionary armed struggle. The armed uprisings attempted by the Chinese communists, however, thoroughly failed, since the Chinese working class did not have enough strength to launch a total attack against the reactionary regime and, moreover, there was no popular support for such actions in China. Therefore, Mao concludes that orthodox Marxist military theory, especially Soviet experiences and theories, do not fit into Chinese situations.

Obviously, Mao's approach to war is different from that of Sun and the Marxists. On the basis of Chinese economic, political, and military characteristics, Mao defines Chinese War as a defensive, protracted war rather than a short, swift blow. His war is one of armed Chinese people against the armed Japanese aggressors. In other words, Clausewitz's way is more suitable for the Chinese War than Sun's or the Marxists'.

In tactics as well as in strategy, Sun Zi focuses on benevolence, which can produce a powerfully psychological pressure on the enemy. The moral and psychological triumph over the enemy must lead to subduing him without fighting. This theme dominates all tactical and strategic activity in Sun. He sees that guerrilla warfare is a means to harass the enemy and the aim of this tactic is to exhauste the enemy's energy in order to render him powerless. Sun Zi states: "An army may be robbed of its spirit and its

commander deprived of his courage."[168] That is to say that, if an army has been deprived of its morale, its commander must also lose heart. The opponent will then win the war.

Obviously, Mao's immediate political goal is to drive the Japanese out of China. Theoretically, Sun Zi's and the Marxist leader's approaches to war do not provide the proper remedy for the Chinese War, because their theories, which center on winning without fighting, cannot drive the Japanese out of China; and offensive strategy rather than the defensive also seems not to fit into the Chinese conditions in the War against Japan. However, Clausewitz, Michael Howard argues, "is a professional soldier writing for his professional colleagues, not an academic lecturing in a political science faculty. He quite deliberately limit[s] his analysis to what [is] likely to be of immediate utility to a commander planning a campaign."[169] Clausewitz's pragmatic and simplified notion meets Mao's demands. That is why Mao synthesizes Clausewitz's pattern rather than those of Sun Zi and the Marxists.

In regard to politics as well, the differences between Mao and Sun and the Marxists are obvious, although Mao's view on politics appears to be somewhat related to theirs. Sun Zi's politics includes the right way (dao), human relations (ren), and righteousness (yi) of Chinese philosophy. From his point of view,

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[168].Sun Zi, The Art of War, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961) 108.

[169] Michael Howard, Clausewitz, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 2.

"cultivate the [D]ao and preserve the laws" will guarantee the victory, which is linked with the interests of the state. Thus, Sun Zi suggests: "War is a matter of vital importance to the state; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mahdatory that it be thoroughly studied."[170] For him him, war is so grave a matter that the state should have a clear purpose before waging war, since "a state that has perished cannot be restored, nor can the dead be brought back to life."[171] Here, Sun tries to formulate a rational basis for the planning and conduct of war, whose objective is to meet the interests of the state. This kind of policy of the state, he says, is carried out by the general, "who understands war is the Minister of the people's fate and arbiter of the nation's destiny."[172] The general's winning of the war must match tne political goal of the state, otherwise, it will waste the national strength, even though the general wins the battle. Sun Zi explains the relationship of war and politics in terms of indirect political domination over military operations.

Similarly, Marx and Engels know well that modern warfare is of a fourfold nature: diplomatic, economic, psychological, and military. However, in examining the nature of war, Marx and Engels explore the relationship between revolution and war from an economic and class point of view. Marx's main contribution to

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[170].Sun Zi. The Art of War. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961) 63.

[171].ibid., p. 143.

[172].ibid. p. 76.

Marxist literature is his Capital, which presents theoretically the economic determination of politics and the connection between social classes. According to Marx's analysis, economic interests will lead to the class struggle between the working and the ruling classes. The activity and movement of the working class will transform the social order and lead to the consious creation of a classless society. Consequently, Engels applies Marxist principle to military affairs. As he writes:

> Nothing is more dependent on economic preconditions than precisely the army and navy. Their armaments, composition, organisation, tactics and strategy depend above all on the stage reached at the time in production and communications. It is not the "free creations of the minds of generals of genius which have revolutionised war, but the invention of better weapons and changes in the human material, the soldiers; at the very most, the part played by generals of genius is limited to adapting methods of fighting to the new weapons and combattants.[173]

In Marx and Engels' historical materialism, armies and armaments, strategy and tactics are the products of the stages of economic development. In other words, economics determines military affairs. Additionally, the decisive factor of war is material rather than the free creation of the minds of generals of genius.

In contrast to Sun and orthodox Marxists, war, in Mao's view, is the policy of the state involved in war. In order to reach one's

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[173].Bernard Semmel, Marxism and the Science of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) 50.

political goal, it is necessary to mobilize people to join in the war and also to coordinate the relationship between the people, the army, and the government. Mao emphasizes that the Chinese War is a national war, one which pursues national interests rather than the interests of political parties. On the other hand, it seems that Chinese benevolence is less important in the Chinese War because of the extremely violent nature of the armed conflict. In this sense, Mao's approach to war and politics is close to Clausewitz's formulation.

In philosophy, the distinction between Mao, Sun, and orthodox Marxists is also substantial. Sun Zi uses the Chinese concept of Yin-Yang as his framework in his study of war and politics. According to this school, Yin and Yang are two mutually complementary principle or forces, of which the Yin represents femininity, darkness, cold, moisture, softness, passivity, etc., while Yang represents masculinity, light, warmth, dryness, hardness, activity, etc. All natural phenomena result from the ceaseless interplay of these forces.[174] For Sun Zi, "the wise general in his deliberations must consider both favourable and unfavourable factors. [Ch]ao [Ch]ao: he ponders the dangers inherent in the advantages, and the advantages inherent in the dangers."[175] So, too, the general should keep a cool head in order

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[174].Feng Yulan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. II, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953) 7.

[175].Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 113.

to deal with the two sides of the unpredictable situation. Moreover, Sun Zi highlights the ties between war and the moral factors of the army; for example, he writes: "Order or disorder depends on organization; courage or cowardice on circumstances; strength or weakness on dispositions."[176] In fact, Sun tries to use such Chinese dialectics to explain the strategic and tactical issues.

Similarly, dialectical materialism is in the realm of Marxist philosophy. Theoretically, Marx and Engels attempt to "overcome Kant's total separation of pure and practical reason, of knowledge and will." Marx claims: "With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." According to him, in the relationship of thinking and being, nature is primary and spirit is secondary. He tries to show that the unity of the world is in the material. In other words, practice is the source of knowledge, which will be developed into theory, and, in turn, theory should guide practice. Therefore, Marx and Engels emphasize the predominace of theory over practice. Consequently, they ignore the function of psychological and moral factors.

Unlike Sun and the Marxists, Mao regards dialectics as the framework of his study of war and politics. He uses dialectics to explore the relationships of the military and the political, the psychological and the physical, the strategical and the tactical,

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[176].Ibid., p. 93.

the theoretical and the practical. Moreover, Mao believes that there is something which cannot fully be understood by people in war: "Things perceived cannot be readily understood by us and only things understood can be more profoundly perceived."[177] From his point of view, psychological elements are not completely appreciated by people. According to his philosophy, nature and spirit are never absolute opposites, rather one flows into the other. The dynamic role of men certainly plays an important role in war. In this sense, Mao betrays the Marxist principle that nature determines spirit, although Mao superficially accepts Marxist ideas. Mao's idea seems to fit in Clausewitz's concept that "Men [arrive] at a type of free thinking that rejecte[s] all belief in theory and postulate[s] that the conduct of war [is] a natural function of man which he perform[s] as well as his aptitude permitte[s]."[178] For this reason, Mao synthesizes Clausewitz's dialectical approach to the study of war and politics.

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[177] Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong vol. I. (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 286.

Mao's philosophical approach seems to be similar to Kant's model of knowledge. Mao's earliest interest in philosophy was heavily influenced by Professor Yang Changchi, Mao's teacher at Changsha Normal School, his father-in-law, and later professor at Beijing University. Professor Yang, who went to Germany to do his Ph.D on Neo-Kantian idealism, was familiar with both oriental and western culture, to a degree then rare among Chinese savants. Under the influence of his professor, Mao was familiar with Kant, and he even discussed Kant's idealism with Edgar Snow in Yennan. This evidence of Mao's familiarity with Kant indicates that it is easy for him to accept Clausewitz's approach to knowledge.

[178] Book II, ch. 2, p. 145.

In summary, it is evident that Mao is heavily influenced by Clausewitz's On War rather than by the Marxist leaders or by Sun Zi, in terms of war and politics. The reason is that, firstly, Marxist military thought, as says W.B. Gallie, "is not developed systematically enough, not related clearly enough to the core principles of Marxist social and political theory."[179] Marxist military writings focus on the class nature of war, economics, and technology, which are ignored by Clausewitz because of his limited and simplified theoretical approach. Additionally, Marxist leaders all are amateurs in terms of military affairs, although Engels served in the German army and Lenin participated in the armed uprising. Their attention to the technical and economic factors of war seems to be overdetailed, whereas strategy and tactics appear to be oversimplified in their works. Therefore, Marxist military theory as a guiding dogma in the Chinese War has the weakness of being unable to meet the demands of Chinese warfare, since, here, the class nature of war is less important than the national liberation aspects of war.

On the other hand, Sun Zi's theory is fully and systemically developed in terms of war, politics, economics, psychology, diplomacy, technology, strategy, and tactics. Unfortunately, his military strategy also fails to attract Mao because of its emphasis on winning without fighting and offensive warfare.

Because of the needs of the Chinese War, Mao has to focus on

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[179].W.B. Gallie, Philosophers of Peace and War, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978) 67.

the relationship between war and politics, which must be less class oriented and more nationalist in its sense. Clausewitz's approach to war and politics meets Mao's requirements not only in politics, but also in strategy, and even to some degree in tactics. His concept of absolute war leads Mao to give up the traditional Chinese concept of harmony. Mao believes firmly that "only with guns can the whole world be transformed."[180] The transformation that he seeks is the defeat of the Japanese and the Nationalists and the launching of a whole series of political struggles in China. Consequently, violence and the people's war become Mao's magic weapons in fighting against his opponent. That is why Mao insists so strongly on the idea that war is politics and politics is war.

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[180], Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 225.

Differences between Mao and Clausewitz

> The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is, however, to change it.[181]

The differences between Mao and Clausewitz in regard to war and politics are substantial, especially in the areas of tactics, ideology, and the relationship of war and politics. Because of the space, the time, and the characteristics of the Chinese War against Japan, Mao has to redefine the tactical and ideological issues of the Chinese War in the light of the thought of Sun Zi and the Marxist leaders. In the end, Mao adopts Sun Zi's ideas for his tactics, the Marxist concept of class nature for his politics, and Clausewitz's discussion of means and ends for his theory of the relationship between war and politics.

It is evident that Clausewitz emphasizes the importance of force or combat in the waging of all wars. He even ridicules the idea of "winning without fighting", although he mentions the possibility of doing so in some particular circumstances. By contrast, Mao, like Sun Zi, holds that it is the most fundamental requirement of war to effect timely and proper change of tactics depending on considerations of space and time as they relate to both belligerent states. In other words, other approaches to overcoming the strong enemy exist on the battlefield. Mao

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[181] Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Lewis S. Freuer, ed., Karl Marx: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (New York: Anchor Books, 1959) 245.

encourages the use of the political campaign to demoralize the enemy forces in war and of flexible tactics to triumph over the enemy.

Clausewitz believes that the ultimate objective of war is defined by the policy of the government. This political goal might be to destroy the opponent, or to occupy the opponent's territory, or to overthrow the opponent's state. However, Mao, in much the same way as the Marxist leaders, sees politics as being the policy of the political party. The purpose of war is to pursue the interests of the political party and the classes it represents. By extension, the final aim of the Party in the war is to take political power. The Party's policy, for Mao, dominates all military activity, although it sometimes appears that he sees the Party's interests as being equal to those of the whole nation.

In his treatment of the relationship between war and politics, Clausewitz shows the political as having priority over military affairs. War is an instrument of politics. Mao regards the violence of war as a permanent phenomenon of the revolutionary struggle, one which runs throughout the whole process of the revolution. For him, violence is the instrument of politics, politics is the soul of war, and people are the motivating force of the revolutionary war. Permanent violence or struggle remains paramount in war and politics.

This chapter will show the differences between Mao's and Clausewitz's thought on war and politics. It will highlight how Mao makes his own strategy and tactics under the influence of Sun Zi

and the Marxist leaders and how Mao uses the war against Japan to serve his own interests.

War

Mao is heavily influenced by Sun Zi, especially in tactics, emphasizing human relations as an essential element of war and downplaying violence in fighting. To take tough measures only after peaceful means fails is the typical Chinese approach to war. In the war against Japan, the immediate political goal, for Mao, is to drive the Japanese aggressors out of China. In this respect, the destruction of the enemy is at the centre of Mao's strategy. However, he also attempts an indirect approach to achieve political goals more effectively and diplomatically and at less cost by trying to synthesize some of Sun Zi's tactics which involve winning without fighting.

According to Clausewitz, war is fighting, which is the only effective force on the battlefield; its aim is to destroy the enemy forces as a means to a further end--one's political goal. His theory divides war into two types: war of observation and war of decision, terms which refer to the kind of limited objectives so common in Clausewitz's times--the former for the occupation of frontier provinces, their annexation, or the use of them for peace negociations and the latter for overthrowing the enemy state. Theoretically, the nature of war, in the abstract, seems to be something extreme, i.e., if the enemy exerts himself to the utmost to achieve his goal, his opponent has no choice but to do the same.

However, human weakness on the battlefield sometimes makes war imperfect. The concept of limited war and the concept of absolute war together form the dual nature of war. Clausewitz writes:

> There is no denying that a great majority of wars and campaigns are more a state of observation than a struggle of life and death--a struggle, that is, in which at least one of the parties is determined to gain a decision. A theory based on this idea could be applied only to the wars of the ninteenth century. . . Not every future war, however, is likely to be of this type; on the contrary, one may predict that most wars will revert to wars of observation. A theory, to be of any practical use, must allow for that likelihood. We shall, therefore, start by considering the kind of war that is completely governed and saturated by the urge for a decision--of true war, or absolute war.[182]

His dialectical analysis shows that war may be either limited war or absolute war, in which violence appears to be paramount since destruction of the enemy forces is the overriding principle of war. War, in Clausewitz's eyes, is slaughter and its price is blood. For this reason, Clausewitz ridicules the concept of winning without fighting. He argues:

> It would be an obvious fallacy to image war between civilized peoples as resulting merely from a rational act on the part of their governments and to conceive of war as gradually ridding itself of passion, so that in the end one would never realy need to use the physical impact of the fighting forces--comparative figures of their strength would be enough. That would be a kind of war by algebra.[183]

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[182].Book VI, ch. 28, p. 488-489.

[183].Book I, ch. 1, p. 76.

From Clausewitz's point of view, war means the use of legitimized mass violence, for which there is no scientific rule. Theoretically, violence leads to the extreme situation, because no belligerent state will abandon its use of force while its opponent increases its military strength. Therefore, war is an act of violence and there is no logical restraint for the use of that force on the battlefield.

By contrast, Sun Zi prefers the winning of the combat without blood, since war in his times seems to be a limited war which coincides with Clausewitz's discussion of limited war. Sun Zi maintains:

> To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy; next best is to disrupt his alliances; the next best is to attack his army; the worst policy is to attack cities. Attack cities only when there is no alternative.[184]

Here, Sun Zi combines two different military schools--limited war and total war--into one, which teaches the smashing of the enemy's morale by deception, while destroying the enemy on the battlefield in the shortest possible time, at the least possible cost, and with the fewest possible casualties. As Sun Zi makes clear, violence is only one part of warfare and not even a preferred one. The aim of war is to subdue an opponent, to change his attitude, and to induce his compliance. Moral strength and

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[184].Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 77-78.

intellectual capacity are, therefore, decisive in war and, if properly applied, should ensure the waging of war with certain success. Sun Zi teaches that physical victory is temporary while psychological success in war may have lasting value in terms of effective control of one's opponent. For this reason, Sun Zi recommends that one should "treat the captives well, and care for them"[185] and that one should "command [one's own troops] with civility and imbue them uniformly with martial ardour"[186] in order to win the victory.

On the theoretical level, Sun Zi's ideas are strongly influenced by Chinese philosophy, especially the core concepts of "benevolence in human relations" (ren) and "virtue" (de), which concentrate on human factors in the social exchange. During the "Spring-Autumn" period (722-481 B.C.), 222 wars were fought in China among the city-states. When the fighting was at its peak, no less than 140 separate states were involved. The ravages of war inspired philosophic schools, such as Confucianism, Mencianism, and Daoism, etc., to study war. They share almost the same view on war, stressing human elements, although each takes a distinct approach to Chinese politics.

Under the influence of the "Hundred Philosophic Schools" of the "Spring-Autumn" period, the emphasis on human relations persists throughout Sun Zi's strategy and tactics of war. Chinese

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[185].Ibid., p. 76.

[186].Ibid., p. 123.

philosophy, according to Feng Yulan, has always emphasized what man is (i.e., his moral qualities), rather than what he has (i.e., his intellectual and material capacities).[187] In this sense, the unity of Confucianism, Mencianism, and Daoism rests in their attitude towards human nature. Ren, one of the most important concepts in Confucian thought, embraces all those moral qualities which should govern one man in his relations with another. According to Confucius, ren is the denial of self: "respond to the right and proper, and everybody will accord you Ren."[188] This notion implies the putting of oneself into the position of the other person in order to receive equal treatment. For Confucius, "desiring to maintain oneself, one sustains others; desiring to develop oneself, one develops others."[189]

Similarly, from the Mencian point of view, the great benefits to the world come from man's practicing altruism. Mencius declares:

> There is no greater delight than to find sincerity when one examines oneself. If one acts with a vigorous effort at altruism in one's seeking for human-heartedness, nothing will be closer to one.[190]

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187. Feng Yulan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 2.

188. Ibid., p. 70.

189. Ibid. p. 71.

190. Ibid. p. 129.

This concept indicates that through altruism one seeks human-heartedness and, through human-heartedness, one seeks sincerity. This is so because the qualities of altruism and human-heartedness both emphasize the lessening of the division between others and the self; and when this division is lessened, the self becomes one with the rest. In this sense, people are fundamentally one with the universe.

Likewise, virtue (de), according to Lao Zi, is the all-embracing first principle for all things: "Great [D]e's form follows only [L]ao. . . . [D]ao g[ives] them birth. [D]e rear[s] them."[191] Lao Zi uses a philosophic approach to explain this idea. For him, if any one thing moves to an extreme in one direction, a change must bring about an opposite result: "He who by [D]ao helps a ruler of men, does not with arms force a conquest of the world, for such thing invites a reversal."[192] This statement means that if people do not understand the general law underlying the changing phenomena of the universe and merely depend on their own caprice for conduct, harmful results must be the consequence. In other words, good will be rewarded with good and evil with evil.

According to these philosophic schools, man should practice kindness to others for the equal relations since everything in human society is closely connected with human relations, which form the basic structure of human activities. It is apparent that

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[191].Ibid., p. 180.

[192].Ibid. p. 183.

Chinese philosophy has a strong influence on Sun Zi's approach to war, the main form of politics during his time. Consequently, he attempts to formulate a rational policy, that of trying peaceful means before resorting to force, in order to win war without blood. This theme remains paramount in Sun Zi's strategy and tactics.

However, Clausewitz emphasizes the importance of civilization on the battlefield. In war, civilized people, who are ruled by the mind, use intelligent means to deal with their opponents. According to Clausewitz, civilization, which increases a people's use of intelligence, plays an important role in war. As Clausewitz states:

> If, then, civilized nations do not put their prisoners to death or devastate cities and countries, it is because intelligence plays a larger part in their methods of warfare and has taught them more effective ways of using force than the crude expression of instinct.[193]

Clausewitz sees this conduct as the overcoming of one's own passion by reason, rather than as a means of influencing enemy behaviour. Faced with such a sharp philosophic contrast between Sun Zi and Clausewitz, Mao seems to rely more on Sun Zi because, as a Chinese philosopher, Mao cannot completely break away from the influence of Chinese traditional culture. Confucianism occupies an important place in Sun Zi's thought; however, Mao ferociously opposes traditional Chinese philosophy where it teaches people to accept imperial authority. The purpose of the Chinese Revolution,

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[193].Book I, ch. 1, p. 76.

in Mao's eyes, is firstly to smash the Confucian predominance of Chinese culture. On the other hand, Mao also sees that human relations, such as taught in traditional philosophy, permeate politics and that they may be used to disrupt the enemy's power and strengthen oneself. He follows Mencius in believing that man can be changed through education and that policy can be used to educate people in order to convert them from being enemies into being friends.[194] Consequently, Mao adopts some of Sun Zi's tactics in dealing with his enemies.

According to Zhang Yu, one of the Eleven Schools which interpret Sun Zi's ideas, "all the soldiers [prisoners] taken must be cared for with magnanimity and sincerity so that they may be used by us."[195] Under the influence of Sun Zi, Mao intensifies the need for the care of prisoners, even in the earliest stage of the Red Army's history. As he states:

> In the propaganda directed to the enemy forces, the most effective means are releasing the captured soldiers and giving medical treatment to their wounded. Whenever soldiers or platoon, company or battalion commanders of the enemy forces are captured, propaganda is immediately carried on among them; they are divided into those who wish to stay and those who wish to leave, and the latter are given travelling expenses and set free.[196]

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194. Mao Zedong, Mao Papers, edited by Jerome Chen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970)

195. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 76.

196. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954) 86-87.

His synthesis shows that Mao accepts this tactic of Sun Zi in the engagements. According to Mao's revolutionary doctrine, kindness does not fit into orthodox Marxist theory. In practice, Mao still regards it as a means of political, psychological and moral destruction of the enemy and as a source of manpower for the Red Army. From his point of view, revolutionary humanitarianism may increase his own strength while reducing the enemy's morale. For this reason, he emphasizes the importance of the psychological battle against the enemy. Mao argues:

> The chief method of destroying them [the Japanese] is to win over Japanese soldiers politically. We should understand, rather than hurt, their pride and channel it in the proper direction, and by treating prisoners of war leniently, lead the Japanese soldiers to see the anti-popular character of the aggression committed by the Japanese rulers.[197]

In reality, Mao employs two different ways to deal with prisoners. The economic way is for the Chinese prisoners while the political one is for the Japanese. In the former case, it must be recognized that most soldiers in the Nationalist army were peasants. Because of the backward Chinese economic system and the place of Confucian ideology in Chinese society, these peasant-soldiers treasure their own lands as much as their lives and most of them joined the Nationalist Army for economic reasons. They would be unwilling to leave their families to fight against others except in defense of their own economic interests. Mao exploits

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[197]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 177.

this weakness of the Chinese peasant by proposing to distribute lands to those prisoners whose families are in the revolutionary areas but have no land and also by offering travelling expenses to those prisoners who want to go home. This tactic seriously damaged the morale of the Nationalist Army and effectively attracted those soldiers who wanted to defend their personal economic interests.

In order to win over the Japanese soldiers, Mao launched a psychological attack in which he plays on human qualities extolled by Confucius and valued by the Japanese. According to Confucius, "the Superior Man (jun zi) takes righteousness (yi) as his 'basic stuff' (zhi)."[198] Confucius places emphasis on the importance of man's possessing the quality of genuineness or truth. As, historically, Chinese culture is the source of Japanese civilization, Japan shares with China such philosophic concepts as human element (ren), virtue (de), righteousness (yi), and loyalty (zhong). Consequently, Mao fully develops Sun Zi's idea of care for prisoners and respect for their pride and on their good treatment. Such action, according to Confucius' thought, indicates that Communist troops are the "Superior Men." The Japanese soldiers faced with the indomitable spirit, the heroic, stubborn fighting capacity of the Chinese Army, engulfed by the Chinese people's war, will become morally impressed by the humanitarian care and spiritual pressure of Mao's psychological attack.

Sun Zi also emphasizes the importance of a harmonious

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198. Feng Yulan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, vol. I, p. 66.

relationship between the general and his troops. He states:

> Because such a general regards his men as infants they will march with him into the deepest valleys. He treats them as his own beloved sons and they will die with him.[199]

Zhang Yu's interpretation makes Sun Zi's idea clear:

> The general must be the first in the toils and fatigues of the army. In the heat of summer he does not spread his parasol nor in the cold of winter don thick clothing. In dangerous places he must dismount and walk. He waits until the army's wells have been dug and only then drinks; until the army's food is cooked before he eats; until the army's fortifications have been completed, to shelter himself.[200]

In this way, the general will gain the utmost respect and support from his troops. Similarly, Mao sees the unity of the generals and the troops as the basic principle of the Red Army. He points out:

> The principle of unity between officers and men, i.e., eradicating feudal practices in the army, abolishing the practice of beating and bullying the men, building up a conscious discipline, and leading a life in which weal and woe are shared by all alike--as a result of which the whole is perfectly united.[201]

From Mao's point of view, this harmonious relationship between officers and soldiers will increase the fighting capacity of the

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199. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 128.

200. Ibid., pp. 128-129.

201. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 96.

army.

In tactics, some of Sun Zi's ideas are also considered to be essential for the Red Army. His principle "know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril,"[202] remains paramount in the war conducted by the Red Army. Sun Zi underlines: "When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant both of your enemy and of yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril."[203] Adopting Sun Zi's tactics, Mao quotes him directly: "We must not belittle the saying in the book of Sun Wu [Zi], the great military expert of ancient China, 'know your enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster.'"[204] From Mao's point of view, mistakes in the war, generally, arise from ignorance about the enemy and about oneself, although the peculiar nature of war makes it impossible in many instances to have full knowledge about both sides.

In accordance with his dictum to know one's enemy, Sun Zi writes: "Those skilled in war avoid the enemy when his spirit is keen and attack him when it is sluggish and his soldiers homesick."[205] For Sun Zi, this is one of the important tactical

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202. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 84.

203. Ibid., p. 84.

204. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954) 187.

205. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 108.

principles. When one cannot know the enemy's situation, the weaker side should retreat in order to defend itself. It is when the enemy is getting tired and morally depressed that one should launch a surprise attack. As he suggests:

> All warfare is based on deception. Therefore, when capable, feign incapacity; when active, inactivity; when near, make it appear that you are far away; when far away, that you are near. Offer the enemy a bait to lure him, feign disorder and strike him.[206]

From the philosophic point of view, Sun Zi synthesizes the idea of deception from Lao Zi, Father of Daoism, who emphasizes concealing one's intention in order to achieve one's political objective. Mao adopts this idea, writing: "When Sun [Zi] said, 'Avoid the enemy when he is full of dash, and strike him when he withdraws exhausted,' he was referring to a way of exhausting and demoralising the enemy so as to reduce his superiority."[207] For Mao, this tactic is used to change the balance of strength between the enemy and oneself. Moreover, the commander should be good at finding where the enemy's weakness is. As Mao points out:

> We can skilfully induce the enemy to commit mistakes, by staging a 'feint,' as Sun [Zi] called it (i.e. 'make a noise in the east but strike in the west,' or in other words, stage a false manoeuvre in the east while attacking in the west).[208]

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[206].Ibid., p. 66.

[207] Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 217.

[208].Ibid., p. 218.

Accordingly, an advance or a retreat which will create false movement can be made just to induce the enemy to commit mistakes in order to attack his weakness. Mao explains that Sun Zi's principle "there can never be too much deception in war,"[209] means that using deception as much as possible will make the enemy lose its judgement and will provide the chance for one to destroy the enemy. Obviously, Mao's idea of the use of deception coincides with that of Sun Zi.

Since, the Red Army sorely lacked arms and other necessary supplies such as medical instruments and medecines, bedding, and clothing, Mao encourages his troops to take and use the enemy's equipment in order to increase the strength of the Red Army. He writes:

> We must not allow the establishment of our own war industry to foster in us a sense of exclusive reliance on it. Our basic directive is to rely on the war industries of the imperialist countries and of our enemy at home. We have claim on the output of the arsenals of London as well as of Hanyang, and what is more, it is to be delivered to us by the enemy's own transport corps. This is the sober truth, not a joke.[210]

Mao's idea here appears similar to that of Sun Zi, who also recommends that the army should take its enemy's equipment in order to meet its own needs in the war. As Sun Zi states:

They [troops] take booty from the enemy because

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209. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 165.

210 Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. I (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 253.

> they desire wealth. . . . Therefore, when in chariot fighting more than ten chariots are captured, reward those who take the first. . . . This is called 'winning a battle and becoming stronger.'[211]

In the same way, Mao rewards those soldiers who destroy the most enemy forces, for this destruction will not only damage the enemy's morale, but will also provide the materiel the Red Army needs.

Strategically, Sun Zi holds that war is closely connected with economics, especially for the attack side, which must have a solid economic foundation, for winning or losing war depends on it, whereas Clausewitz omits the economics of war. According to Sun Zi, waging a war needs one thousand fast four-horse chariots, one thousand four-horse wagons covered in leather, and one hundred thousand mailed troops. All materials required in war must be transported to the battlefield and the cost of materials and preparation amounts to one thousand pieces of gold a day. When this money is in hand, war can be launched. For economic reasons, Sun Zi warns:

> When the army engages in protracted campaigns the resources of the state will not suffice. When your weapons are dulled and ardour damped, your strength exhausted and treasure spent, neighbouring rulers will take advantage of your distress to act. And even though you have wise counsellors, none will be able to lay good plans for the future.[212]

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[211].Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 75-76.

[212].Ibid., p. 73.

From Sun Zi's point of view, one will certainly lose the war if one launches a protracted attack on one's enemy, since such a war will damage the national economy; if the state does not have sufficient economic power to support the successive attack, it will fail in the war. This idea is adopted by Mao to analyze the economic reasons for Japan's eventual defeat. For him, it is Japan's economic weakness that will decide its destiny. As Mao argues:

> Hundred of thousands of casualties, the drain on arms and ammunition, deterioration of troop morale, popular discontent at home, shrinkage of trade, the expenditure over the thousand million yen, condemnation by world opinion. . . . provide a basis for our ability to fight a protracted war and win final victory.[213]

Mao explains the reasons why the Chinese can win the War against Japan. China is a big but weak country, while Japan is small but strong. The Japanese desire to occupy the whole of China will lead them to conduct a protracted war against the Chinese. The drain on their manpower and material resources makes them intensify their attack, which will cost them more. For this reason, the Japanese invasion will, in the long run, fail.

On the whole, in tactics and even in some strategy, Mao is more Chinese than Clausewitzian. The reason for this particularity is that, from childhood, his education was Chinese.

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213. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 141.

His knowledge of Confucianism, Mencianism, and Daoism makes him a leading scholar in this area in the eyes of Chinese academics; and, indeed, Mao saw himself foremost as a scholar and philosopher. As Chinese traditional thought and customs penetrate every corner of Chinese society, it is not possible to change a man's way of thinking in a short time. From the philosophic point of view, Mao appears to see that diplomacy and human relations are at the centre of war and politics. The theoretical Chinese approach to the relationship of war and politics is one that shows that all human activity is dependent on human relations. From the military point of view, historical Chinese military cases, especially those in Sun Zi's The Art of War, are rich in tactics appropriate to Chinese war. Sun Zi's idea of winning without fighting, which is based on human relations, inspires Mao to use positive tactics in dealing with his enemies. Consequently, Chinese soldiers, familiar with these traditional tactics, accept them readily. Such traditional military ways provide advantages for Mao to effectively destroy the Japanese in a national war.

On the other hand, Mao is also a Chinese Marxist, although he received a traditional Chinese education. Chinese philosophy, especially Confucianism, in Mao's mind, is the main obstacle in the Chinese Revolution. Mao vigorously criticizes Confucianism, which gained and sustained its predominance among competing systems of thought in traditional China because of its eclecticism. He even ridicules that "in the Spring-Autumn Era, there were no righteous

wars," "righteousness" being one of the Confucian core themes.[214] The culminating point of Mao's criticism of Confucianism is the nationwide political campaign against Confucianism in 1973. It seems that this anti-Confucianism is a strong part of Mao's thought throughout his life.

However, the differences between Clausewitz, Sun Zi, and Mao are significant. In his theory of absolute war, Clausewitz centers on extreme violence since, for him, war is nothing but mutual destruction. In Clausewitzian combat, human factors are decisive elements, but are limited to the commanders, their soldiers, and the people, whereas Sun Zi sees that everything in war is a matter of human relationships. He attempts to find a way to disrupt the enemy's balance of power and to maintain his own in order to win without bloodshed. Human relations, in his eyes, exist ever between the enemy and oneself. By contrast, Mao's view is different from those of Clasuewitz and Sun Zi. Strategically, Mao acknowledges the extreme violence of war, in which the enemy must be wiped out physically and ideologically. Tactically, Mao searches for a way which may lead to psychological and moral victory over the enemy because he, too, sees that the value of human relations is everywhere: not only within the army and between the belligerents, but also in the people, the army, and the Party. However, in tactics, Mao's view also differs from that of Sun Zi who advises:

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[214].This proverb is from Mencius. He made this ironic remark because in the Spring-Autumn Era, the feudal princes of China incessantly fought one another for power. See: Selected Works vol. I (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 170.

"To a surrounded enemy you must leave a way of escape."[215] Mao, on the other hand, wants to annihilate the enemy.

Mao uses dialectics to find more flexible methods in Chinese philosophy and historical military cases for overcoming the political, military, and logistical weaknesses of the Red Army. In this sense, Sun Zi's tactics and some of his strategy, adopted by Mao, become a solution for reviving the Red Army.

Politics

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle."[216] The class struggle, in Marxism, is the core source of revolution and war. Without primary understanding of its class nature, according to Lenin, revolution and war cannot be fully understood. Consequently, Mao follows the Communist fathers in considering politics as the policy of the political party. For Mao, too, the class nature of revolution dominates the nature of war.

Unlike the Marxists, Clausewitz, in his On War, views the state as a whole and regards politics as the policy of the state. He explains that "the state is thought of as a person, and policy

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215. Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 109.

216. Karl Marx and Friedrick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communst Party," in Harold L. Laski, Communist Manifesto: Socialist Landmark (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1962) 119.

as the product of its brain."[217] From his point of view, the policy made by the state represents the interests of the state, like the ideas of human beings produced by the brain. This concept is fully expressed in his works:

> The aim of the policy is to unify and reconcile all aspects of internal administration as well as of spiritual values, and whatever else the moral philosopher may care to add. Policy, of course, is nothing in itself; it is simply the trustee for all these interests against the outside world. That it can err, subserve the ambitions, private interests, and vanity of those in power, is neither here nor there. In no sense can the art of war ever be regarded as the preceptor of policy, and here we can only treat policy as representative of all interests of the community.[218]

In terms of its goal and function, policy should be considered to meet the interests of the whole society. In other words, policy represents all interests of the state. Clausewitz's analysis is based on his limited and simplified concept of war and politics. Consequently, he regards the policy of the state as a whole, rather than as a mixture of the interests of the different political parties.

Clausewitz, Peter Paret comments, "stands at the beginning of the nonprescriptive, nonjudgemental study of war as a total phenomenon and On War is still the most important work in this

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[217].Book I, ch. 1, p. 88.

[218].Book VIII, ch. 6, pp. 606-607.

tradition."[219] In his opinion, Clausewitz's work has lasting value precisely because Clausewitz attempts to explore the political essence of war considered as the policy of the state as a whole, rather than as the policy of the ruling class. According to Clausewitz, the political objective of war can be of two kinds; either to annihilate the enemy or to render him powerless--for the immediate political objective, or to achieve peace--for the final objective of the state's policy. Obviously, seeing the state as a whole, Clausewitz does not mention the class nature of politics.

However, the Marxist theory of revolution can only be understood in relation to the class struggle, which is dependent on the basic tenets of historical materialism. Every class struggle means a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and the class struggle will lead to the triumph of the working class over the ruling class.

Marx explains class struggle in terms of its historical origins, development, and limits, in relation to definite and changing economic conditions. This historical view is for Marx the essential element in his class doctrine. The evolution of the economic formation of society appears to be a process of natural history and, for Marx, history is the process of man becoming man through a succession of modes of production, his own creation. According to Marx, the relations between capital and labour, the

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219. Peter Paret, ed Makers of Modern Strategy: from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 213.

axis on which our entire present system of society turns. Because of the contradiction of socially organized production and private ownership, Marx is sure that the working class will come into conflict with the ruling class.

Marx and Engels divide society into different classes on the basis of their political economy. Class struggle, in their view, means revolution of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, in which the working class will overthrow the dictatorship of the ruling class. In this sense, Marxist politics is the politics of the working class. Class interests take priority over national interests.

Lenin's theory of revolution and war, based on the Marxist theory of economic and class struggle, calls for the development of a revolutionary movement which will overthrow Russian capitalism and establish socialism in Russia. Lenin, as an orthodox Marxist, is chiefly concerned with the political aspect of war, especially its class nature, in his military writings taken as a whole. He believes that war is bound up with the politics of a given state and a given class within that state and that war must be a political means for the working class to achieve its political objective. He argues:

> All wars are inseparable from the political systems that engender them. The policy which a given state, a given class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war is inevitably continued by that same class during the war, the form of action alone being changed. . . . How can a war be accounted for without considering its bearing on the preceding policy of the given state, of the

given system of states, the given classes?[220]

According to Lenin's analysis, politics means the policy of the political party, which represents the interests of the class. In revolutionary war, the Communist Party, as the representative of the working class, pursues the interests of the proletariat. In terms of the function of the Party, Lenin points out:

> A party which succeeds in consolidating itself for persistent work in contact with the masses, a party of the advanced class, which succeeds in organizing its vanguard, and which directs its forces in such a way as to influence in a Social-Democratic spirit every sign of life of the proletariat--such a party will win no matter what happens.[221]

According to him, the Party should do everything possible to strengthen its relations with the masses in order to achieve the best results in its revolution. In this sense, the party is the vanguard of the working class:

> Its [the Party's] task is not to serve the working-class movement passively at each of its separate stages, but to repesent the interests of the movement as a whole, to point out to this movement its ultimate aim and its political tasks, and to safeguard its political and ideological independence.[222]

The Party will, then, defend proletarian interests in the

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220. V.I. Lenin, Lenin: Selected Works, vol. 24 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960) 399.

221. V.I. Lenin, Selected Works, vol. 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1967) 591.

222. V.I. Lenin, Selected Works, vol. I (New York: International Publishers, 1967) 92.

struggle against the bourgeoisie. The working class, led by the Party, will fight for its ultimate objective. In the political, economic, and military conflicts, both proletariat and bourgeoisie struggle in their own self-interest, which is, in Lenin's view, the real meaning of politics.

Mao's approach to politics seems, superficially, to be similar to that of Clausewitz, since he claims the Chinese War against Japan to be a national war under the leadership of the Nationalist Government. In the war, the basic tactical task of the Party, according to Mao, is to form a broad national united front in order to defeat the Japanese. In other words, Mao wants to change the state of conflict existing between the Nationalists and the Communists into a state of common action against the enemy. Mao believed that the Chinese Revolution would always follow a tortuous road. The alignment of forces within both the Nationalist and Communist camps can change, he believes, just as everything else in the world changes. The new tactics of a broad united front must start from the two fundamental facts that the Japanese are bent on reducing all China to a colony and that Chinese forces still have serious weaknesses compared to the enemy. In order to attack the Japanese effectively, it is necessary to organize millions upon millions of Chinese and move a mighty army into action so that the Chinese can finally defeat the Japanese. Since the united front is a political weapon and the united front itself implies the integration of all political opposites, it is also possible that, at a critical moment, this integration might break down and that

the different social classes that make the united front might find themselves at war with one another. For this reason, Mao sees politics and war as being part of a single continuum. Class struggle may appear as an international struggle at one historical moment, and as a domestic struggle at another. From Mao's point of view, there is no real distinction between war and politics. All is class struggle, with both domestic and international manifestations. It is his dialectics which explains him leaning on the Marxist concept of class struggle; and his emphasis on the class nature of the National United Front is the essential feature of his political theory, which divides the United Front into different classes. As Mao writes:

> It is beyond all doubt that only by resolutely maintaining the National United Front can we overcome the difficulties, defeat the enemy and build up a new China. At the same time, however, the ideological, political and organisational independence of any party that participates in the United Front must be preserved, and this applies to the [Guomintang], the Communist Party and other parties and groups alike.[223]

Mao believes that both unity and diversity exist in the United Front. On the one hand, all Chinese nationalities should be united against the common enemy and defend national independence and integrity. On the other hand, the parties joined in the United Front should also maintain their own independence because of their class interests. For this reason, Mao believes that unity within

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223. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. II (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1954) 249.

the United Front must be relative and that the parties must enjoy their own freedom in order to reach their political goals. He further states:

> The independence of parties and classes should be preserved, that is, their independence and autonomy within the United Front should be preserved; the essential rights of the parties and the classes are not to be sacrificed on the ground of co-operation and unity; but, on the contrary, the rights, up to a certain limit, of the parties and classes are to be firmly upheld; only thus can co-operation be facilitated and can there be any co-operation.[224]

From Mao's point of view, the consistency of the national struggle with the class struggle lies in the war against the foreign invasion. Consequently, the class struggle is to be subordinated to the principle of the national struggle. However, the goal of the Communist Party is not just to drive the Japanese out of China along with the other political parties; it is also to establish its own regime. In other words, only by achieving national liberation will it be possible for the toiling masses to achieve their own liberation. Such common struggle against the Japanese is not only an alternative policy of the Party for national liberation, but also provides an opportunity to broaden the following of the Party by showing its superior effectiveness in the common struggle. Hence, the Party has to apply different approaches to protecting its interests.

Mao's emphasis on the class nature of war and politics appears

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[224].Ibid., vol. II, p. 264.

similar to Lenin's idea:

> War is the highest form of struggle between nations, states, classes, or political groups, and all laws of war are applied by a nation, a state, a class, or a political group waging a war to win victory for itself.[225]

According to Mao, the cause of war lies in the class struggle or in pursuing the interests of the class or the political party. In the military struggle, the Party will play an important role. Mao takes from Lenin's theory in order to emphasize the Party's leadership of the Red Army. He states that "our principle is that the Party commands the gun; the gun shall never be allowed to command the Party."[226] This principle has been regarded as the cornerstone of Mao's military theory. The Party must control the revolutionary armed forces and the armed struggle; and the army must never be allowed to become at the same time the political leading force of the revolution or a force independent from the political leadership of the Party.

For Mao, under the leadership of the Party, the army will fight for the people's interests, which also coincide with the Party's. He writes:

> This army is powerful because all who have joined it are self-disciplined; they have united themselves and fought together not for the private interests of a few individuals or a small clique, but for the interests of the broad masses of the people and the interests of the whole nation. To stand firmly on the side of the Chinese people and to serve them

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[225].Ibid., vol. I, p. 187.

[226].Ibid., vol. II, p. 272.

whole-heartedly--that is the sole aim of this army.[227]

Fighting for the interests of the Chinese people is, for Mao, the same as fighting for the interests of the Party, which represents the people's interests. To ensure that the Party has effective control of the Army, Mao insists that the Party branch should be organised on the company level. At this level, the Party representatives, whc are responsible for the polical education of the troops, are mainly concerned with the formulation of local policy and the transmission of Party directives to lower levels.

It appears, therefore, that Mao follows Marx's and Lenin's approach to politics; and politics is considered to be the Party's policy or the Party's interests. He believes that the class nature of war necessitates the Party's leadership in the war. It is impossible to have a good understanding of the Party's policy and, consequently, of the Party's building in isolation from armed struggle, from guerrilla wafare. Armed struggle is an important component of policy. Without armed struggle neither the proletariat, nor the people, nor the Party can have any standing at all in China and it will be impossible for the revolution to triumph. In other words, the Army, led by the Party, struggles to achieve the Party's ultimate goal. It seems that Mao's politics, in both the long and short terms, rests on the united front, which is, in his view, the main vehicle to unite all forces against the

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[227].Ibid., vol. IV, p. 254.

enemy. The real purpose of Mao's using this tactic is, on the one hand, to arouse Chinese national hostility toward the Japanese, and, on the other, to use this hostility against his counterpart, the Nationalists, by charging them with damaging the War against Japan because of their passiveness. In this sense, the united front serves as an instrument to triumph over the enemy. Mao writes:

> The united front and armed struggle are the two basic weapons for defeating the enemy. The united front is a united front for carrying on armed struggle. And the Party is the heroic warrior wielding the two weapons, the united front and the armed struggle, to storm and shatter the enemy's positions.[228]

Mao seems to stress the class nature of politics as a whole, whereas it is in the special circumstance of the national war against Japan that Mao sees politics as the policy of the government. In this regard, Mao appears to be more Marxist than Clausewitzian.

However, differences exist in the attitudes towards politics of Clausewitz, the Marxists, and Mao. Clausewitz regards politics as the policy of the government and omits the class factor in politics, whereas Marx, Engels, and Lenin consider that politics centre on the interests of the working class which the Communist Party represents; and the working class is the main force of the revolution. By contrast, Mao, in his theory, subscribes to the Marxist point of view of the Party's leadership in the revolution;

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[228].Mao Zedong, Selected Works, vol. II (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 295.

but, on the practical level, he believes that the working class cannot win the revolution by itself. It should make alliances with other classes, such as the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie. This alliance will lead to Communism, rather than being merely a moment in the development of the revolutionary struggle.[229] For Mao, moreover, the main revolutionary forces are the peasants, not the working class. Mao's view seems to conflict with that of other Marxists, since Mao sees that there is no such thing as abstract Marxism, but only concrete Marxism. For this reason, he attempts to "Sinify" Marxism, to give it a Chinese identity.

War and Politics

Clausewitz's theory of absolute war and real war maintains that fighting is the sole means to reach the political objective. All war is violent by nature and politics determines the characteristics of war. The extreme of force or violence, in his view, runs throughout the whole process of war. This nature of war explains why force or violence in the fighting will be intensified with the increase of military power on both sides. On this topic, Mao goes much further than Clausewitz, for Mao not only uses the model of the people's war in the military action against his armed

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[229].Mao's formula seems to coincide with Stalin's approach. However, the latter emphasized that the period of four-class collaboration would soon be superseded by a phrase in which workers and peasants would find themselves in conflict with the whole of the bourgeoisie. See: The Political Thought of Mao Tsetung, New York: Praeger, 1976, p. 67.

opponent, but also in the political struggle against his unarmed opponent. This advancement of Clausewitz's theory of absolute war and real war is a prominent feature of Mao's military and political theory.

According to Clausewitz, "war is merely the continuation of politics by other means." His definition implies that all the military action amounts to a fight for the political objective: either for immediate political goal, i.e., the destruction of the enemy or for the real objective of war, i.e., the peace. The employment of all available means to reach the political end is considered to be a legitimite and realistic approach for attaining final victory. "Its [war's] ends, in the final analysis," writes Clausewitz, "are those objects which will lead directly to peace."[230] Violence, therefore, appears to be limited to combat on the battlefield.

Mao, however, regards violence as an instrument for achieving military and political objectives and people as the motivating forces of the revolutionary movements. In his view, struggle is permanent, while peace is temporary. Mao points out at the Conference of Party Secretaries at the provincial, municipal, and autonomous regional levels on January 27, 1957:

> Lenin quoted Clausewitz: "war is the continuation of politics by other means." Struggle in the peace-time is politics and so is war, though certain special means are used. War and peace are both mutually exclusive and interconnected and can be transformed into each

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[230].Book II, ch. 2, p. 142.

other under given conditions.[231]

From Mao's point of view, the political struggle during peacetime is also the continuation of politics without the use of military forces. The purpose of struggle is to compel his political opponent to do Mao's will:

> Struggle here means the 'peaceful' and 'bloodless' struggle, ideological, political and orgainzational, which goes on when we are united with the bourgeoisie and which turns into armed struggle when we are forced to break with it.[232]

It is evident that Mao extends Clausewitz's theory of absolute war to the Chinese domestic political struggle since the psychological victory over the enemy is more significant than the physical. Consequentely, the psychological violence seems to be an important way to win over the people and to consolidate his political control. Failing to dominate psychological elements, in Mao's mind, means his loss on the political battlefield. According to Mao's doctrine, it is a pleasure to struggle against Heaven, against Earth, and against the human being. The struggle against the enemy is, then, similar to that against natural phenomena. Nature may govern the natural world, but, Mao is not willing to be dominated by it. The people, he maintains, should fight against nature and transform it in order to survive. Similarly, the people

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231. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. V (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1977) 368.

232. Ibid., vol. II, p. 290.

will and must struggle against their enemy with the same spirit that they oppose to nature and should govern their own political destiny. With this belief, Mao attempts to launch a people's war to destroy his political opponent ideologically, economically, and militarily, since the people's war has proved to be an effective weapon in the fight against the Japanese and the Nationalists. People's war, in Mao's hands, becomes a magic weapon, which can be used to annihilate both armed and unarmed enemy.

In terms of his doctrine of struggle, Mao sees that the enemy will change its strategy from a military attack to a political one, because of the nationwide victory of the People's Liberation Army. He writes:

> After the enemies with guns have been wiped out, there will still be enemies without guns; they are bound to struggle desperately against us; we must never regard these enemies lightly. If we we do not now raise and understand the problem in this way, we shall commit a very grave mistake.[233]

Still, some Party members will be corrupted by the bourgeois political and economic attack. Mao warns all Party members:

> With victory, certain moods may grow within the party--arrogance, the airs of a self-styled hero, inertia and unwillingness to make progress, love of pleasure and distaste for continued hard living. With victory, the people will be grateful to us and the bourgeoisie will come forward to flatter us. It has been proved that the enemy cannot conquer us by force of arms. However, the flattery of the bourgeoisie may conquer the weak-willed in our ranks. There may be some Communists, who were not conquered

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[233]. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. IV (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 364.

> by the enemies with guns and worthy of the name of heros for standing up to the enemies, but who cannot withstand sugar-coated bullets; they will be defeated by sugar-coated bullets.[234]

According to Mao, there are three reasons for the continuing struggle against his political opponent inside and outside the Party. Firstly, the remnant classes will ferociously fight against the new regime and restore their favourable political system. In collaboration with external forces, they will often continue to use whatever opportunity arises to cause trouble. Secondly, a new bourgeoisie may be born inside the new regime because socialist Chinese society emerges from the womb of capitalism because it bears the imprint of the old society, and it is, economically and in other aspects, still not a fully matured society. Thirdly, corrupt and degenerate Party members and officials may change the nature of the Party and the state. The very essence of the political struggle, in which bloodless fighting replaces blood, is still a matter of political power. For these reasons, the Party and the people should be fully prepared for further struggle. From Mao's point of view, the enemy's nature is evil like a wolf because its nature determines that it attacks people whenever it has a chance. Nor will the enemy change its nature, or perish by itself, or step down from the political stage. Because of its nature, the enemy will not act according to Chinese philosophy like "the butcher who lays down his knife and at once become a Buddha" or

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[234].Ibid., p. 374.

"the robber who has a change of heart and becomes a virtuous man."[235] The enemy will take revenge on the Party and the people in direct and indirect ways. Here, Mao criticizes those who are strongly influenced by Confucius, or Mencius, or Daoism and who would show kindness towards the enemy. Mao supports his argument by quoting an ancient Greek fable:

> One winter's day, a farmhand found a snake frozen by the cold. Moved by compassion, he picked it up and put it in his bosom. The snake was revived by the warmth, its natural instincts returned, and it gave its benefactor a fatal bite. The dying farmhand said, 'I've got what I deserve for taking pity on an evil creature.'[236]

Mao uses this example to warn the Party and the people and to encourage them to penetrate the disguise of the enemy, who lost on the battlefield but who might turn to political campaigns for retaliation. Moreover, this political struggle against the bourgeoisie will, according to Mao, be permanent, because the Party must consolidate its effective control over the state, and it will and must take tough measures against the bourgeoisie. Such actions will inevitably cause the bourgeoisie to revolt. After the Communists take power, it is only by continuous struggle that the new regime can be solidly established. Mao compares this ongoing struggle with a farmer's weeding of his field so that grass will grow after the weeding. In this sense, the unarmed struggle, which

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235. Ibid., vol. IV, p. 428.

236. Ibid., vol. IV, p. 304.

replaces the armed struggle, involves the continuation of politics in peacetime.

Mao's idea of the continuous struggle seems to extend into politics Clausewitz's concept of the extreme of violence in war, for the reciprocal struggle of the two classes will and must lead to extreme conflicts. Mao brings his military strategy and tactics not only into the Party's struggle but also into the struggle between the two classes. He believes that "the revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them."[237] Consequently, the people's war against the bourgeoisie in peacetime will serve as the means to effectively defend the Party's interests.

According to Mao, the Party should have faith in the people and rely on them. The people become the cornerstone of Mao's revolutionary theory. He explains:

> What is a true bastion of iron? It is the masses, the millions upon millions of people who genuinely and sincerely support the revolution. That is the real iron bastion which it is impossible, and absolutely impossible, for any force on earth to smash. The counter-revolution cannot smash us; on the contrary, we shall smash it.[238]

For him, the people are a true bastion of iron. Only by depending on the people can the Party win the ultimate victory over its enemy. The struggle against the enemy should be carried through

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[237].Ibid., vol. I, p. 147.

[238].Ibid., vol. I, p. 147.

to the final goal, which is to destroy the enemy thoroughly, not just physically but also ideologically. The mobilization of the people, who are loyal to the Party, or, more precisely, to Mao, will produce sufficient psychological and material force to make up for his inferiority at the top level of the Party and also create advantages which will allow him to triumph over his opponents. Consequently, Mao attempts to use all his military strategy and tactics in the fight against his political antagonist.

The tactic of "lur[ing] the enemy deep," in the Party's struggle between the factions, is Mao's main approach, used by him to give the people the "four big freedoms--speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates, and writing big-character posters," thereby seducing his political opponents to criticize the Party or his policy. Such a military tactic works very well for Mao, even in all the political campaigns in which he and his followers use it. His naive opponents are fooled once and again. Then, Mao siezes upon the weakness of his opponents and uses the people's force to destory them ideologically as counter-revolutionaries.

From Mao's point of view, it seems that Clausewitz insufficiently develops his theory of absolute war and real war, because he limits his ideas on military action. Clausewitz states:

> The natural aim of military operations is the enemy's overthrow, and strict adherence to the logic of the concept can. . . . admit of no other. Since both belligerents must hold that view it would follow that military operations could not be suspended, that hostilities could not end until one or other

side were finally defeated.[239]

According to Clausewitz, the purpose in absolute war is to overthrow the enemy state or to destroy the enemy's forces. In other words, if the enemy is totally annihilated, the political goal is reached and the war will end. In his theory, violence seems to be the salient feature of war. However, Mao's theory of war and politics appears to go further than Clausewitz's. Mao believes that violence as an instrument is used to achieve a political objective in wartime or in peacetime. Bloody violence is the striking figure of war, which is intended to compel the enemy to do one's will and bloodless force is also the dominant form of political struggle. Moreover, the enemy's defeat does not mean the ultimate victory for the winner, but marks the beginning of a new struggle, of which bloodless politics will govern the whole process. According to Mao, the physical and ideological destruction of the enemy is the real victory. It seems clear that Mao's concern is the political victory because the military achievement is part of politics. Hence, Mao points out:

> To win countrywide victory is only the first step in a long march of ten thousand Li [Chinese mile]. Even if this step is worthy of pride, it is comparatively tiny; what will be more worthy of pride is yet to come. After several decades, the victory of the Chinese people's democratic revolution, viewed in retrospect, will seem like only a brief prologue to a long drama. A drama begins with a prologue, but the prologue is not the climax. The Chinese revolution is great, but the road after the revolution will be longer, the work

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[239].Book VIII, ch. 2, p. 579.

greater and more arduous.[240]

Compared to Clausewitz's view, Mao's seems to be more radical. Most importantly, Mao sees that the long struggle will last until the bourgeoisie is physically and ideologically wiped out. This idea remains paramount in Mao's thought for the rest of his life.

Theoretically, Mao's core theme of struggle lies in his dialectics; and he writes: "the combination of conditional, relative identity and unconditional, absolute struggle constitutes the movement of opposites in all things."[241] On the one hand, no contradictory aspect can exist in isolation. Without its opposite aspect, each loses the condition for its existence. On the other hand, the struggle between opposites permeates the whole process of a contradiction and makes one process transform itself into another. In accordance with his analysis, struggle is an absolute form in the development of nature and society. As he states at the Party conference on the propaganda work:

> Truth stands in opposition to falsehood. In society as in nature, every entity invariably divides into different parts, only there are differences in content and form under different concrete conditions. There will always be wrong things and ugly phenomena. There will always be such opposites as the right and the wrong, the good and the evil, the beautiful and the ugly. The relationship between them is one of unity and struggle of opposites. Only by comparing can one distinguish. Only by making distinctions and waging struggle can there be development. Truth develops through its

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240. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. IV (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 374.

241. Ibid., vol. I, p. 343.

struggle against falsehood.[242]

In Mao's theory, absolute struggle exists everywhere. The purpose of struggle is survival, as in the war against Japan, where it is a question of saving Chinese nationality and not becoming a Japanese colony. From Mao's point of view, there is a very real potential threat to the people. Consequently, the people should fight for their survival every year, every month, and every day, otherwise they will be destroyed by their enemy.

Moreover, Mao's concept of struggle seems to be closely connected with the thought of both Clausewitz and the Marxists. Clausewitz's realist approach to war and politics focuses on combat, which, in his mind, is a way to settle conflict between belligerents, since war is a clash of living forces; if one cannot triumph over one's opponent, one will be destroyed. It is this concept of Clausewitz that leads Mao to give up the concept of harmony of traditional Chinese philosophy and to adopt the extreme solution of violence. Mao warns his colleagues that revolution is not a dinner party but a violent action. On the other hand, Marxists divide the world into two classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The Marxist belief in class struggle makes Mao fight for the final objective of the Party. Mao declares: "Our revolutions are like battles. After a victory, we must at once put

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242. Mao Zedong, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. V (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967) 433.

forward a new task."[243] It is on this basis that Mao formulates his theory of "continuous revolution," and he uses this indefiniteness to create a series of political uncertainties in his struggle against his opponents. The purpose of such uncertainties is to lure Mao's opponents into exposing themselves in order that he may clear them from the Chinese political stage. Hence, Mao's absolute struggle against his political opponents dominates the whole process of the Chinese revolution.

Conclusion

The differences between Mao and Clausewitz make clear the very nature of Mao's approach to war and politics. The mixture of different concepts--Sun Zi's tactics and, to some degree, his strategy, Marxist class analysis, and Mao's own "continuous revolution"--constitutes his own theory of war and politics.

From the military point of view, it is easy for Mao to make use of Sun Zi's tactics and strategy, for Chinese soldiers are familiar with this traditional approach. From a Marxist point of view, however, Sun Zi's philosophy does not seem to serve revolution because he prefers indirect attack on the enemy; nevertheless, Mao synthesizes some of Sun Zi's concepts in the Chinese War against Japan. Mao's dialectical approach indicates that, on the one hand, he adopts whatever seems to be useful for him and is flexible in his tactics to reach his objective. On the

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[243] Mao Zedong, Mao Papers, edited by Jerome Chen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970) 63.

other hand, Mao's dialectical approach also underscores his differences from the Marxists, since an orthodox Marxist should focus on the Party's interests and class interests rather than on human relations.

In terms of political ideology, Mao, like the Marxist leaders, gives priority to the proletarian class and, along class lines, considers Chinese politics as being divided into revolutionary and counter-revolutionary interests. Consequently, he sees the Party's task as being the mobilization of the people to fight against the Nationalists, who represent bourgeois interests in China. The Chinese War against Japan, according to Mao, is a national war, in which the class struggle takes the form of a national struggle. In this war, Mao does not see the leadership as being fixed. The leadership of war, in his eyes, must fall into Communist hands. For Mao, the immediate political objective of the war is to drive the Japanese out of China, and the ultimate goal is to establish his "new" China, i.e., a new Chinese government under the leadership of the Communist Party. Mao attempts to use the temporary coalition between the Nationalists and the Communists to attain his first goal. Once it is achieved, he can turn to his ultimate objective. In this sense, the united front, in Mao's mind, has grown from being a tactic to being a strategy and finally an ideology. The united front is for Mao a process of ideological escalation, whose aim is to integrate the classes, parties, and the people. Strategically, Mao uses temporary compromise (his sacrifice of class interest) in order to gain final victory over his political

opponent, the Nationalists. Such a strategy points clearly to his political understanding of war. War is in every sense a means to a political end. Its violent nature is only secondary to the political purpose.

As for the relationship between war and politics, Mao's basic tactic is the destruction of his enemies one by one. In other words, by exploiting conflicts of interest within the enemy camp, Mao wins over some factions and then attacks the others. In the end, Mao will be able in this way to annihilate all his opponents. In this strategy, the people are the trump card in Mao's hand. He uses the destructiveness of the enemy to win the people over. He channels their hatred, their zeal and loyalty to the Party into his political purpose. War mobilizes the people politically and Mao organizes their hatred of the enemy to build a strong political movement. Class struggle, which, in Mao's mind, is equivalent with politics, is a protracted war. Each battle defines new fronts and each battle mobilizes the "people" for the next battle. Thus, struggle is not just the process which leads to victory, it is also an integral aspect of the mobilization process through which the "people" is re-created. Because of the class struggle, politics becomes a protracted war which can never be won outright, thus subjecting the people to never-ending struggles and to one campaign after another. The people, in Mao's hands, become no more than an instrument of political struggle.

The differences between Mao and Clausewitz reveal that Clausewitz talks about war between industrialized, European states,

whereas Mao highlights national war against foreign aggressors within a backward China; that Clausewitz sees people as a concept of the whole population of the state, whereas Mao's concept of the "people" is flexible--the "people" is a class concept which contains different classes and different class factions, depending on the stage of the struggle; and that Clausewitz's pattern of absolute war is used on the battlefield, whereas Mao extends it to the domestic political and psychological struggle between the Party's factions. Mao sees the Party politics as the soul of war, the people as the instrument, and violence as a constant way to wage political struggle. Thus, combining Chinese and foreign concepts, Mao forms his own revolutionary theory of war and politics.

Mao goes much further than Clausewitz by expanding his notion of politics to include politics between states and politics within the state, i.e., domestic class struggle. Mao abandons the limitations of Clausewitz's theory and creates a political theory in which all politics is a protracted war. According to him, psychological victory over the enemy is the ultimate goal. Extreme psychological violence, therefore, characterizes the Chinese Revolution; and Mao inflicts on his own people the misery which Sun Zi warned against: "There has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited."[244]

The theories of Clausewitz serve Mao and the Chinese Communist

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[244].Sun Zi, The Art of War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971) 73.

Party very well during the time when the country is suffering from foreign invasion. Mao's synthesis of Clausewitz's theories and Sun Zi's traditional Chinese tactics and strategy, as well as Marxist ideas of class struggle, enables him to mobilize the population to fight a successful popular war against a well-armed enemy and in the end, to win victory in the civil war. However, Clausewitz's realist theory of war and politics does not serve Mao or the Chinese people well on the "battlefield" of domestic politics. By prolonging political warfare, Mao robs the people of the victory that was rightfully theirs.

Conclusion

Clausewitz's On War made a great impact on Mao's theory of war and politics. Mao synthesized certain of Clausewitz's ideas, enriching his own theory, in order to pursue his revolutionary objectives. The concept that war is politics and politics is war remained paramount in Mao's thought for the rest of his life. Accordingly, People's War, in which the people were to be the decisive factor rather than weapons, was the means which he chose to achieve his political as well as his military goals. The struggle against the armed enemy and the unarmed political opponent had to be carried through to the end, since their evil nature could not be changed. Violence, therefore, is the salient feature of Mao's political and military theory. However, a detailed analysis of his writings shows that Mao's political and military thought remained his own in spite of its being a synthesis of the ideas of Sun Zi, Clausewitz, and Lenin.

There are obvious similarities among Sun Zi, Lenin, and Clausewitz, although they are from different political schools. Sun's emphasis on the relationship of war and politics, indirect strategy, and flexible tactics seems to correspond to the concerns of Clausewitz's theory of absolute war and real war, which advocates the priority of the political over the military, disruption of the enemy's alliances, destruction of the enemy on the battle-field in the shortest possible time, at the least possible cost, and with the fewest possible casualties, as well as

the need to "know your enemy and know youself." On the other hand, Marx's and Engels' interests in Clausewitz and Lenin's interpretation of On War, mainly the theory of real war--"war is the continuation of politics by other means (violent means)"--provided political and theoretical evidence which led the Marxists who followed them to study Clausewitz's theory of war and politics. Therefore, the two circles of relationships, such as Sun Zi--Clausewitz--Mao and Clausewitz--Lenin--Mao, closely connected Mao and Clausewitz. From the nationalist point of view, it was easy and natural for native Mao to adopt some of Clausewitz's formulae, for he shared some points of view with Sun Zi. In terms of political ideology, it was equally natural for him to explore the very essence of war, in accordance with Lenin's belief in the class nature of war and politics.

Clausewitz's theory of absolute war advanced the idea that the extreme of violence intensified armed conflicts and that the use of force led to total destruction of the enemy. This extreme use of force was closely linked to the policy of the government involved in war, whose ultimate objective was peace. In accordance with Clausewitz's analysis, war was a bloody and destructive test of physical, psychological, and moral strength; the violent resolution of the crisis, the wish to destroy the enemy's military forces always appeared as the highest of all possible aims in war.

Mao completely accepted this idea and focused on the extreme of violence in war. His attitude towards war was connected with his background. A graduate from a Normal School, he had not received

formal political and military training and relied heavily on his rich knowledge of peasant wars in Chinese history. Unfortunately, most Chinese military thinkers whom he knew had emphasized strategy and tactics rather than analyzing the nature of war. With the introduction of Marxism and Leninism into China, Chinese intellectuals tried to use these doctrines to explore the nature of war. Because of the weakness of Marxist military theory, poor translations, and their own lack of comprehension, they did not succeed in grasping the essence of war.

However, Clausewitz was a professional soldier writing for his professional colleagues. His analysis of war provided a new approach to understanding and conducting war, although much of what he had to say about fighting was not relevant to the Chinese War against Japan not only because of the different space, time, and nature of war, but also because of the political, economic, and technical transformations of war. That Clausewitz regarded war as an extreme but natural expression of politics seemed to fit the conduct of the Chinese National War. Consequently, Clausewitz's model of defense as a stronger form of war than attack deeply impressed Mao since it may create a chance for a weaker force to make up for its weakness by maximizing the advantages of a defensive position. The people's function in a defensive war became Mao's main concern in the War against Japan. Theoretically, Clausewitz's use of the dialectical approach to analyzing the relationship between absolute war and real war, his use of the epistemological perspective for showing the evolution of knowledge

of war, and his use of history to support his theory seemed to coincide with Mao's academic approach. Clausewitz's theory of absolute war made Mao believe that war was first and foremost bloodshed. Hence, Mao defined the Chinese War as a defensive, people's war, which seemed to be for him the favorable form of war. This strategy, developed in the Civil War and the Korean War, appears to have been a fixed pattern in Mao's thought. On several occasions, he vigorously criticized Soviet combat plans and military thought because they were solely concerned with offensive strategy and showed no consideration for defensive war. The Soviet approaches did not conform with Chinese situations.[245]

Clausewitz saw politics as the policy of the government, which represented the interests of the whole community. The interests of the state determined the military action and, in turn, war was merely an instrument of that policy. Consequently, the political objective of war was twofold: the immediate political goal--total destruction of the enemy or its incapacitation; and the ultimate goal of war--peace. All warfare centered on these two objectives.

Likewise, Mao regarded politics in the War against Japan as being the policy of the Nationalist government, especially in the early stage of the United Front. Jiang Jieshi seemed, in Mao's political strategy, to be the titular leader in the war and even in the future reconstruction. The immmediate political goal for all Chinese was to drive the Japanese out of China; on the other hand,

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[245].Stuart Schram, edited Chairman Mao Talks to the People (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974) 128.

the Nationalist government never exercized effective and complete authority over all areas of China and all military forces subject to Chinese control. The ultimate objective of the war was, in Mao's mind, to take state power--to overthrow Jiang's dictatorship. Mao believed that vigorous prosecution of the war and an aggressive stand against the Japanese would win him more adherents and give him an advantage in the United Front. By contrast, Jiang's attacks on the Communists, he thought, would weaken his political standing with those who were disillusioned with Jiang's conduct of the War.

As for the relationship between war and politics, Clausewitz maintained that military action was the instrument of politics and that politics determined the nature of war. In this sense, war was merely the continuation of politics by other means, since no war could be isolated from the policy of the government involved in war and since no government could completely abandon the legimate use of its military forces in settling disputes between states, disputes in which no other means but force could achieve the political goal. In the broader sense, political interests determined military interests. In the narrower sense, military activity might not translate into political intention.

Theoretically, Mao's adoption of Clausewitz's model in dealing with war and politics convinced him that war was bloodshed while politics was the sane process without bloodshed. The use of force, according to Mao, was the best choice when peaceful means could not resolve conflicts. Therefore, the formula that war was politics and politics was war became Mao's approach to settling all political

issues. However, following both Clausewitz and Chinese tradition, Mao was ever alert to the psychological impact of violence, and he normally urged an economy of violence in meeting political objectives.

On the other hand, the differences between Mao and Clausewitz were also substantial. Because he was a Chinese Marxist, Mao could not escape the influence of traditional Chinese and Marxist philosophy. In his military theory, Sun Zi occupied an important place, especially in tactics. Sun Zi's emphasis on indirect attack seems to have led Mao to use some positive tactics against the enemy. Attention to prisoners and deception in fighting could overcome the shortcomings of Clausewitz's model of war. Therefore, Mao attempted to launch psychological attacks on the enemy in order to break down the enemy's moral strength. In fighting, he preferred the tactic: "Attack where he [the enemy] is unprepared; sally out when he does not expect you" and the strategy "Know your enemy and know yourself."

The Marxist emphasis on the class nature of war and politics formed another aspect of Mao's theory. His dialectics caused him to divide everything into two parts: thesis and antithesis. He held that the war must be under the leadership of the Communist Party, although he upheld the legal leadership of Jiang Jieshi in the anti-Japanese War. Mao subscribed to Marx's and Lenin's teaching that the class struggle would lead to revolution, that the proletaiat and peasantry would overthrow the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and that the Party was the vanguard of the proletariat.

In his practice of Lenin's model, Mao focused on the Party's absolute leadership of the army, which was merely an instrument to achieve Party goals.

Finally, the fight against the armed enemy and the unarmed political opponent, in Mao's mind, should be uppermost throughout the whole military and political struggle. Mao applied the theory of violence to politics. The unarmed enemy would remain, he believed, to challenge the Communist leadership, even when the armed enemy was wiped out. Revolutionary violence was an indispensible weapon that could triumph over the unarmed enemy. Mao launched a series of political campaigns to prove his prediction. The outcome was that the people became the victim of the political struggle between factions inside the Party. As a matter of fact, violence is really a forceful approach to settling armed conflicts. Howeveer, when the armed enemy was physically annihilated, it no longer appears suitable as a matter of political combat.

The similarities and differences between Mao and Clausewitz show Mao's theory of war and politics to be a blend of Chinese and foreign concepts. Indeed, Mao used a dialectic approach in adopting whatever was needed in order to settle the issues he was facing. Through his synthesis of Sun Zi's, Clausewitz's, and Lenin's theories, Mao formulated his own revolutionary theory that struggle was absolute whereas unity was temporary.

However, the most important influence of Clausewitz on Mao was his theories of war, based on the theoretical acceptance of graduations of violence, which seemed to be Clausewitz impressive

intellectual and psychological achievement. Such theories helped Mao to understand people's war in which absolute violence or absolute struggle, in terms of the very nature of war, remained paramount. In such war, the "people" are Chinese and Marxist elements. The people not only joined in war but also the people's war would create a new generation of the people. For Mao, People's War was an effective means to achieve his political ends, since he considered the people as the decisive factor in both war and politics. Therefore, Mao's methodological framework provides the theoretical support for such intention. Voluntarism in Mao's theory was stressed over determinism, the subjective over the objective, the psychological over the physical, and practice over theory.

This influence of Clausewitz was also reflected in Mao's theoretical writings on war and politics. Up to the early 1930s, Mao's perception and analysis of war and politics were couched in terminology for the most part recognizable as deriving from Marxist categories; and this orientation perceived war and politics in class terms. However, in the late 1930s, Mao focused in his works on the Clausewitzian model of war and politics, rather than on the Marxist concept of class struggle because Marxism had emphasized mainly the technical and economic aspects of war and politics. The very fact that Mao read Clausewitz's On War is in itself evidence of Clausewitz's direct influence on Mao.

Clausewitz's influence on Mao was significant. Having neglected to examine this influence in the past has led to misunderstanding about Mao's thought and the place of Western

concepts in it. It is important to recognize that Clausewitz helped Mao break free of certain categories of both traditional Chinese thought (for example, the inutility of protracted war) and Marxist doctrine (neglecting defense and military theory generally), in order to develop a distinctive political and military theory. By understanding the impact of Clausewitz on Mao, it becomes possible to appreciate the complexity of Mao's intellectual achievement, his "Sinifying" of Marxism which paved the way for the acceptance of Western political and military theory, selected strictly according to Chinese national needs. Thus, while contemporary observers emphasize Chinese nationalism in Mao's thought and the negative impact of his so-called "closed door" policy, one should not forget that it was Mao who first opened the door to the United States. His absorbtion of different strands of Western thought laid a solid foundation for a greater acceptance of Western theory in Chinese culture.

Although Clausewitz occupied a very important place in Mao's theory of war and politics, Mao was nonetheless a Chinese Marxist. Consequently, the Party and class interests held the major position in his revolutionary theory. In political ideology, he acknowledged the significance of Marxism in the Chinese Revolution, whereas in practice, Mao rejected the universality of Marxism and emphasized the Chinese realities and Chinese tradition. His purpose was to transform the very substance of Marxism in order to adapt it to Chinese conditions. Meanwhile, Chinese philosophy seems to have also been the source of his theory, especially, the concepts of the

changeability of human nature and deception which he used in his tactics, even though he criticized traditional Chinese philosophy when it did not meet the requirements of the current revolutionary struggle.

Mao's theory was, then, a mixture of different political concepts. It would be oversimplified and one-sided to attempt to define Mao's theory as a whole in terms of one political school. Precisely because Mao's theory represents a personal synthesis--that war is politics while politics is war, that the people are soldiers while soldiers are the people, and that the struggle is for survival while survival must be struggle--it remains his own, despite Clausewitz's important influence on his thought on war and politics.

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